

OXFORD EDITION

THE  
POETICAL WORKS  
OF  
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

*WITH INTRODUCTIONS AND NOTES*

EDITED BY

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If thou indeed derive thy light from Heaven,  
Then, to the measure of that heaven-born light,  
Shine, Poet ! in thy place, and be content :—  
The stars pre-eminent in magnitude,  
And they that from the zenith dart their beams,  
(Visible though they be to half the earth,  
Though half a sphere be conscious of their brightness)  
Are yet of no diviner origin,  
No purer essence, than the one that burns,  
Like an untended watch-fire, on the ridge  
Of some dark mountain ; or than those which seem  
Humbly to hang, like twinkling winter lamps,  
Among the branches of the leafless trees ;  
All are the undying offspring of one Sire :  
Then, to the measure of the light vouchsafed,  
Shine, Poet ! in thy place, and be content.

# Preface.

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IN this Edition of the Poems of William Wordsworth there will be found—now for the first time within the compass of a single volume of convenient size and modest price—every piece of original verse which we know to have been published by the poet himself, or of which he can be shown to have authorised the posthumous publication.

The OXFORD WORDSWORTH comprises (1) the *Minor or Miscellaneous Poems*, reprinted from the standard edition of 1849-50,—the last issued during the lifetime and under the direct authority of the poet; (2) a reprint of the original text of the two Poems of 1793, viz. *An Evening Walk*, and *Descriptive Sketches*; (3) a *Supplement*, giving, so far as it has been possible to ascertain, every piece published by Wordsworth on any other occasion whatsoever, but omitted by him from the final edition of 1849-50; (4) *The Prelude*<sup>1</sup>, or *Growth of a Poet's Mind*; an *Autobiographical Poem*; (5) *The Excursion* (text of ed. 1849-50); (6) all the *Author's Notes* of ed. 1849-50, together with many notes found in various early editions, but subsequently omitted; (7) sundry *Prefaces*, *Postscripts*, &c., given at the end of Vol. V., ed. 1849-50; (8) a *Chronological Table of the Life of Wordsworth*, and (9) some few miscellaneous *Notes* by the *Editor*, who is also accountable for (10) the *Chronological Data* prefixed to the individual poems.

Great pains have been taken to ensure a high degree of accuracy in the text of this Edition. The poet's use of capital letters—a sure index to his intentions of stress—has been carefully and, it is hoped, in every instance reproduced; but it seemed idle to preserve with scrupulous exactness certain oddities and inconsistencies of spelling—a matter to which Wordsworth, unlike his brother-poet, Walter Savage Landor, appears never to have given serious attention. The editor has throughout compared the punctuation of the standard text of 1849-50 with that of the *Aldine Wordsworth*, issued in 1892<sup>2</sup>. In most instances of divergence between them he has followed the recent authority; but in a few cases a regard—it may be, a superstitious regard—for the metrical design of the poet has compelled him to revert (not without misgiving) to the pointing of the standard text. Be this as it may, we must always bear in mind the fact that Wordsworth's system of punctuation was no mere logical or intellectual organ, but rather—in the words of the *Aldine Editor*—"an elaborate

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<sup>1</sup> Published, shortly after the poet's death, in 1850.

<sup>2</sup> Edited by Edward Dowden, LL.D., &c., &c., Professor of Oratory and English Literature in the University of Dublin.

and ingenious instrument, intended at once to guide the reader to the meaning and to serve a metrical purpose."

In three places, where a misprint in the text of 1849-50, while not absolutely demonstrable, was yet in the highest degree probable, the Editor has substituted a reading of one or more of the earlier editions, taking care to add in a footnote the precise authority attaching to the adopted reading. On behalf of the change thus introduced into line 3 of *Misc. Son.*, II. xxiv: "a lamp *sullenly* (*vice* suddenly) *glaring*," it will probably suffice to refer the reader to the numerous passages cited in the footnote on page 266; bidding him add thereto, from *Eccles. Sonnets*, II. xv. line 13: "Ambition . . . is no *sullen fire*;" and also, from *Inscriptions*, X., lines 27, 28: "by *sullen* weeds forbidden To resume its native *light*." In defence of "*choral* (*vice* coral) fountains" (p. 217) it may be observed, first: that Wordsworth was not a writer of nonsense-verses; secondly: that he had a rooted aversion to slipshod grammar, and, in particular, to the very solecism exemplified in the phrase (of text 1849-50), "*coral fountains*," *i.e.* to the adjectival misuse of a substantive *pur et simple*. We may feel confident that the poet-critic who found fault with W. Rowan Hamilton's phrase: *weariness of that gold sphere*, and remonstrated with R. P. Gillies for having written: *where the lake gleams beneath the autumn sun*; who vehemently advocated the employment of *vernal* and *autumnal* as being both "unexceptionable words," and declared it to be a matter of regret that Miss Seward's bantling, *hybernal*, was not in more familiar use;—we may, surely, feel quite satisfied that this severe precisian would never have condescended to the vile phrase, *coral fountains*; all the more because, in the words, *fountains coralline*, he had a phrase ready to his hand which (had it but been possible on the score of sense) was undeniably "unexceptionable," as well from the metrist's as from the grammarian's point of view. It should be added that the *Aldine* Editor led the way in adopting both readings—*sullenly* and *choral*—into his text. The third instance above referred to (see page 498) calls for no particular comment in this place.

In the extract from Chaucer's *Troilus and Cresida*, contributed by Wordsworth to the volume projected by Thomas Powell in 1840, line 118, as it appears in the original issue of that volume (1841), runs precisely as it runs in Chaucer's original, and as it now runs in the *OXFORD WORDSWORTH*.—

"With a soft voice, he of his Lady dear"—

When, however, in the following year, this extract, along with the poet's other adaptations from Chaucer, was being reprinted for publication amongst his Collected Poems, the compositor perpetrated the ludicrous and (one would have thought) quite palpable blunder of foisting in the word 'night' (evidently caught from the expression 'night by night,' which occurs four lines below), between the words 'soft' and 'voice.' From that day to this, the line has run, in every edition of the Poems:—

"With a soft night voice, he of his Lady dear"—

an arrangement which obviously yields neither good metre nor common sense. It seems strange that neither Wordsworth himself, nor his clerk and proof-reader, Mr. John Carter, should, while revising the several editions of the Poems that appeared between 1842 and 1850, have detected so manifest an error of the press. But we may

perhaps suppose that their attention on these occasions was wholly given to Wordsworth's original compositions, and that the text of the adaptations from Chaucer, having been settled once for all, was simply left to take care of itself. Professor Dowden, in a paper read to the Wordsworth Society in May, 1882, was the first to suggest the possibly intrusive character of 'night;' he has, however, retained that word in the text of the Aldine Edition (1892). The Editor of the *OXFORD WORDSWORTH*, finding himself unable to conceive the possibility of any difference of opinion as to the true character and origin of 'night' in the line under notice, has summarily removed it from the text, without note, comment or apology of any kind whatsoever.

In a very few instances—possibly not more than half-a-dozen in all—where a passage either of striking beauty or otherwise interesting had been rejected from the text of ed. 1849-50, the Editor has ventured to restore the cancelled lines to their original position, placing them within brackets, to indicate that they form no part of the standard text, and adding in a footnote the precise amount of authority which they derive from the numerous earlier editions. The second stanza of *Louisa* has been replaced after this fashion; so, too, have the opening stanza of *Dion*, and a stanza (originally the-sixth) of the *Ode to Duty*. Thus restored, the passages in question are sure to catch the eye of the reader; whereas, had they been relegated to the "Notes and Illustrations" at the end of the volume, they would necessarily have escaped the notice of that numerous class who read poetry readily enough, but turn with instant aversion from anything in the shape of a Note.

The Minor Poems are here presented in the order in which they stand in ed. 1849-50. The notion of that order or arrangement was, as is well known, first conceived by Wordsworth in 1812, and, after three years of sedulous elaboration, was finally perfected and embodied by him in the Collective Edition of 1815. To it, despite much ridicule and hostile criticism, the poet adhered with unwavering faith throughout the rest of his life. On this question of arrangement, the Editor is fain to confess, his affections are most humble; he has no ambition to see a goodlier scheme than Wordsworth's. Accordingly, those who purchase the *OXFORD WORDSWORTH* must needs content themselves with the works of the poet arranged according to an antiquated scheme of his own devising. As to the advantages alleged by some to accompany a chronological arrangement of the poems, it will be time enough to discuss them when the materials for the construction of such an arrangement are in our hands. At present, our knowledge of the chronology<sup>1</sup> of the poems is very far from complete; and, accordingly, every attempt to set the poems in their true chronological order must of necessity be largely tentative and conjectural.

In compiling the Chronological Life-Table, the Editor has, of course, freely availed himself of the two great Sources for the Biography of Wordsworth, viz. the *Memoirs* of the poet, published in 1851 by his nephew Christopher, late Bishop of Lincoln, and the *Life* in three volumes by Professor Knight of St. Andrews, published in 1889.

<sup>1</sup> In this matter of chronology, be it observed, the poet himself is little better than a blind guide. Whenever he attempts to assign dates to his several compositions, he frequently errs, and not seldom contradicts himself. Nevertheless, in many instances, Wordsworth's testimony is all we at present have to go upon; and, wherever the date he gives is not discredited by evidence from another source, it has been thought best to adopt it in this Edition, as at least provisionally correct.

Though not very inviting to look at, this Life-Table will, the Editor trusts, be found useful by sundry persons in divers ways. To the old Wordsworthian it will prove convenient for occasional reference; the young reader may pick out thence the leading dates and events of the poet's life; while the more advanced student may, it is hoped, learn by its aid something at least concerning the affinities—moral, poetical and intellectual—which connect Wordsworth with the preceding generation, and with the men of his own troubled and disjointed times.

It may be well to point out that in the *OXFORD WORDSWORTH* no attempt has been made to annotate the poems systematically; nor has the Editor thought it fair to cumber the pages with such information as the student can, without any difficulty, obtain for himself from Biographies, &c., now-a-days within the reach of all. Here and there, in order to facilitate the continuous reading of the poet, the Editor has thrown in a brief footnote, for the most part giving a name or a date referred to in the text; and to these footnotes he has added a very few notes (printed along with the Author's Notes at the end of the volume), to convey some novel suggestion, or else to supply some necessary or interesting fact regarding the text. Beyond this he has not attempted to go. The main object of the Series to which this Edition belongs is to provide the public, not with notes or commentary, but with a thoroughly sound, complete and legible text; and in the volume now before the reader this object, the Editor ventures to believe, has been realised to the fullest extent possible.

In view of the vague and unsettled character of the chronology of much of Wordsworth's poetry, the Editor has deemed it inexpedient to print a formal Chronological Table or List of the Author's Works, such as that given in Vol. VII. of the Aldine Edition. He has, however, used all diligence in testing the accuracy of the dates here prefixed to the individual poems. In the interest of the student and for purposes of reference, the lines have been numbered throughout the entire volume.

In conclusion, the Editor's best thanks are due to Professor William Knight, LL.D., of St. Andrews, for permission, granted in the readiest and most cordial fashion, to make use of certain particulars regarding the chronology of the Sonnets of 1802-3, which he himself had, at considerable pains, hunted up for use in his forthcoming Edition of the Poems. To Professor Dowden the Editor stands indebted for good counsel, assistance, and encouragement during the continuance of his task, as at many other times. Here, too, what has he to offer in return but grateful thanks?—

“Evermore thanks, the exchequer of the poor.”

Lastly, his warmest acknowledgments are due to the Rev. Thomas Hutchinson of Kimbolton, Leominster, the poet's nephew by marriage, who, at considerable inconvenience to himself, in the kindest manner undertook to read a proof of the Chronological Life-Table, marked several errors therein for correction, and suggested certain improvements, which, so far as was found practicable, have been carried into effect.

T. H.

#### NOTE.

I have taken four verbal and six punctual corrections from Mr. Nowell Smith's three-volume edition (London, 1908).

March, 1910.

T. H.

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# CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

## OF THE

### LIFE OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

THE following Table is intended to show (1) the chief events of the poet's life, (2) the dates of the publication of his principal works, and (3) his chronological relations to certain of his predecessors and contemporaries.

W. = William Wordsworth, the Poet.  
 John, &c. W. = John, &c. Wordsworth.  
 H. = Hutchinson.  
 S. T. C. = Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

| A.D. | ÆT. |   |
|------|-----|---|
| 1725 | -   | About this year Richard Wordsworth migrates from Yorkshire to Westmoreland, is made Superintendent of the Lowther estates, marries, and purchases the property of Sockbridge, in the parish of Barton, near Penrith.  |
| 1745 | -   | Richard W. Receiver-General of the County of Westmoreland.  |
| 1754 | -   | [George Crabbe born.]   |
| 1762 | -   | [Wm. Lisle Bowles born. Joanna Baillie born.]   |
| 1763 | -   | [Samuel Rogers born.]   |
| 1764 | -   | [ <i>The Traveller</i> (O. Goldsmith).]   |
| 1765 | -   | [Bp. Percy's <i>Reliques of Ancient English Poetry</i> .]   |
| 1766 | -   | John Wordsworth, attorney, of Cockermouth, chief law-agent to Sir Jas. Lowther, and Steward of the Manor and Forest of Ennerdale (born 1741, second son of Richard W.), marries Anne, daughter of Wm. Cookson, mercer, of Penrith, by Dorothy Crackanthorpe, his wife (of the Newbiggin Hall family). To him are born : |
| 1768 | -   | (1) Richard W. (May 19th; died May 19th, 1816).   |
| 1769 | -   | [ <i>The Beggar's Petition</i> (Rev. Thos. Moss).]  |
| 1770 | -   | (2) WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, BORN APRIL 7th. [Mary Hutchinson born Aug. 16th (died Jan. 17th, 1859). James Hogg born. Chatterton died. <i>The Deserted Village</i> (Goldsmith).]   |
| 1771 | 1   | (3) Dorothy W. (Dec. 25th; died Jan. 25th, 1855). [Gray died. Scott born. <i>The Minstrel</i> (Beattie).]   |
| 1772 | 2   | (4) John W. (Dec. 4th; drowned Feb. 5th, 1805. [S. T. Coleridge born.]  |
| 1774 | 4   | (5) Christopher W. (June 9th; died Feb. 2nd, 1846). [Goldsmith died. Southey born. <i>The Country Justice</i> (Langhorne, 1774-5).]   |
| 1775 | 5   | [Chas. Lamb born. W. Savage Landor born.]   |

| A.D. | ÆT. |  |
|------|-----|--|
| 1777 | 7   | During 1776-7 W. W. and Mary H. attend Anne Birkett's infant school at Penrith. [H. Hallam born. Thos. Campbell born.]   |
| 1778 | 8   | Mother dies. W. lodges at Anne Tyson's cottage and attends Hawkshead Grammar-school. [Wm. Hazlitt born.]   |
| 1779 | 9   | [Thos. Moore born.]  |
| 1781 | 11  | [Ebenezer Elliott born. <i>The Library</i> (Crabbe). <i>Triumphs of Temper</i> (Hayley).]  |
| 1782 | 12  | [ <i>Poems</i> (Wm. Cowper). <i>Edwin and Elyrida</i> (Helen M. Williams).]  |
| 1783 | 13  | John W. (father) dies, leaving his five children in the guardianship of their uncles, Richard Wordsworth and Christ. Crackanthorp. [ <i>The Village</i> (Crabbe).]   |
| 1784 | 14  | [Dr. Johnson died. Leigh Hunt born. <i>Elegiac Sonnets</i> (Charlotte Smith).]   |
| 1785 | 15  | "And has the sun his flaming chariot driven," &c. written (W.'s earliest extant verses). [De Quincey born. Thos. Love Peacock born. <i>The Newspaper</i> (Crabbe). <i>The Task</i> (Cowper).]  |
| 1786 | 16  | "Dear Native Regions" &c.; "Calm is all Nature," &c. written. [ <i>Poems</i> (Robt. Burns: Kilmarnock Ed.).]   |
| 1787 | 17  | Enters at S. John's College, Cambridge. Studies Italian under Agostino Isola. <i>Evening Walk</i> begun. [B. W. Proctor born.]   |
| 1788 | 18  | Long Vacation <sup>1</sup> at Hawkshead. First visit to London (autumn). [Byron born. <i>Levesdon Hill</i> (Wm. Crowe).]   |
| 1789 | 19  | Long Vac. with Dorothy W. and Mary H. at Penrith. <i>Evening Walk</i> finished. [ <i>The Loves of the Plants</i> (Darwin). <i>Sonnets</i> (W. L. Bowles). <i>Songs of Innocence</i> (Wm. Blake).]  |
| 1790 | 20  | Walking tour in Long Vac. with Robt. Jones through France and Switzerland. [ <i>Julia: a Novel</i> (with <i>Sonnet to Hope</i> : Helen M. Williams).]  |
| 1791 | 21  | B.A. Camb. (Jan.). Forncett Rectory, Norfolk; London; Plas-yn-llan, N. Wales (with Robt. Jones); Paris (Nov.); Orleans. <i>Descriptive Sketches</i> begun. <i>Guilt and Sorrow</i> begun.  |
| 1792 | 22  | Orleans; Blois (friendship with Michel Beaupuy: Nature now yields the first place to Man in W.'s affections and imagination); Paris (Oct.): W., on the point of offering himself as a leader of the Girondins, is recalled to England; London; <i>Descriptive Sketches</i> finished. [Shelley born. Keble born. <i>Pleasures of Memory</i> (Rogers). <i>The Economy of Vegetation</i> (Darwin).]   |
| 1793 | 23  | <i>Evening Walk</i> publ. (Feb.); <i>Descriptive Sketches</i> publ. London; Isle of Wight, with Wm. Calvert (July); walking tour by Salisbury—Stonehenge—Bath—Bristol—Tintern Abbey—Goodrich Castle—to Plas-yn-llan. Wanderings through N. Wales (autumn). Shocked by England's declaration of war against France (Feb.). Indites a "Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff, &c. By a Republican." [Felicia Hemans born. <i>Tam o' Shanter</i> , &c. (Burns).] |
| 1794 | 24  | At Armathwaite near Keswick; Halifax; at Windybrow under Skiddaw with Wm. Calvert; Whitehaven; wanderings through Lancashire   |

<sup>1</sup> It was during either this vacation or that of 1794, that W. spent four weeks with his cousin Mrs. Barker in Rampside, a village of Low Furness, Lancashire, right opposite Peel Castle, which lies between Walney Isle and the mainland. Cf. the *Elegiac Stanzas suggested by a Picture of Peel Castle*.

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|      |     | and the Lake Country. Proposes to start "The Philanthropist, a monthly Miscellany;" searches in vain for congenial employment; anxious and perplexed. <i>Guilt and Sorrow</i> finished. [ <i>Fall of Robespierre</i> (S. T. C.). <i>Songs of Experience</i> (Blake). Robespierre executed (July 28th): see <i>Prelude</i> X., ll. 570-603.]   |
| 1795 | 25  | At Penrith with Raisley Calvert, who dies, leaving W. £900 (Spring). Halifax (?); London; settles with Dorothy W. at Racedown, Dorset (Oct.). Meets S. T. C. at the house of Mr. Pinney, Bristol (prob. late in Sept.). <i>The Borderers</i> begun. <i>Margaret</i> ; or, <i>The Ruined Cottage</i> begun. [Keats born. Carlyle born.]  |
| 1796 | 26  | Racedown. <i>The Borderers</i> finished. [Burns died. Hartley Coleridge born. <i>Poems</i> , 1st issue (S. T. C.). <i>Joan of Arc</i> (Southey).]   |
| 1797 | 27  | Racedown. Intimacy with S. T. C. leads to outburst of poetic activity. W. and sister visit S. T. C. at Nether Stowey cottage (July 2-16), whence they move to Alfoxden, some three miles distant. Charles Lamb visits S. T. C. (July 9-16). <i>Lyrical Ballads</i> planned with S. T. C. <i>Margaret</i> finished (aft. merged in <i>Excursion</i> , Bk. I.). W. in London (Dec.). [ <i>Poems</i> (S. T. C.; Lamb and Lloyd). <i>Poems</i> (Southey).]  |
| 1798 | 28  | Alfoxden (Jan.-June). 700 lines of "The Recluse" written; also many <i>Lyrical Ballads</i> , and <i>Peter Bell</i> . [Wm. Hazlitt visits Nether Stowey and Alfoxden (May?).] Bristol (July); London (Aug. 27th). <i>Lyrical Ballads</i> publ. (Sept.). Via Yarmouth to Hamburg with Dorothy W. and S. T. C. (Sept. 16th); arrives at Goslar (Oct. 6th) <sup>1</sup> . [ <i>Epistle to a Friend</i> (Rogers). <i>Plays on the Passions</i> , Vol. I. (Joanna Baillie: Vol. II., 1802; Vol. III., 1812). <i>Gebir</i> (W. S. Landor).]  |
| 1799 | 29  | Goslar; Göttingen; whence (April 21st) via Hamburg to Yarmouth; with Thos. and Mary Hutchinson at Sockburn-on-Tees (May 1st?). <i>The Prelude</i> begun in Germany, where W.'s poetic activity persists in full force. Walking tour through Lake Country with S. T. C., John W., and Cottle, the Bristol publisher of the <i>L. B.</i> (Oct.). Settles, with Dorothy W., in Dove Cottage, Townend, Grasmere (prob. Friday, Dec. 20th). [T. Hood born. <i>Pleasures of Hope</i> (Campbell).]   |
| 1800 | 30  | Dove Cottage. John W. sojourns (Jan.-Sept. 29th). S. T. C. visits Grasmere (Apr., May), and, with wife and Hartley, sojourns at Dove Cottage (June 29th-July 24th). Mary H. visits Dove Cottage twice in 1800. S. T. C. settles at Greta Hall, Keswick (Aug.). Frequent intercourse between W. and S. T. C. <i>The Recluse</i> , Bk. I., written (publ. 1838); also many <i>Pastorals</i> and other poems. Bks. I. and II. of <i>The Prelude</i> were probably finished before the close of 1800. The poem was then laid aside until the spring of 1804. W.'s poetic activity fully maintained in 1800. [Cowper died. Macaulay born.] |
| 1801 | 31  | Dove Cottage. <i>Lyrical Ballads</i> , 2nd ed., two vols. pub. (Jan.). Unproductive interval, Jan.-Dec. 1801. [ <i>Thalaba</i> (Southey). <i>John Woodvil</i> (Lamb). <i>Poems</i> ("Thos. Little").]   |

<sup>1</sup> During this six months' sojourn abroad, W.'s republican ardour evanesced, and with it his resentment towards England as the foe of France. "We are right glad to find ourselves in England," he writes on his return to Cottle, "for we have learned to know its value." Cf. the lines beginning: "I travelled among unknown men."

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| 1802 | 32  | Dove Cottage. Second period of productive energy (Dec. 1801—Dec. 1803: declining somewhat in 1803). Thirty-nine of the poems publ. in 1807 now written; also much of Bks. I. and II. of <i>The Excursion</i> . The Sonnet now (May 21st onwards) regularly and frequently cultivated. Four weeks' visit to Calais (Aug.). W. marries Mary H. at Brompton near Scarborough (Oct. 4th); returns to Grasmere (Oct. 6th). <i>Lyrical Ballads</i> , 3rd. ed. [Darwin died.]  |
| 1803 | 33  | Dove Cottage. Birth of W.'s firstborn, John (June 18th). W. and Dorothy start with S. T. C. on a tour in Scotland (Aug. 16th.). They meet Walter Scott, and return to Grasmere (Oct. 14th). Sir Geo. Beaumont buys and presents to W. the little estate of Applethwaite, three miles from Greta Hall. <i>Yarrow Unvisited</i> written (Nov.) [ <i>Temple of Nature</i> (Darwin).]   |
| 1804 | 34  | Dove Cottage. <i>The Prelude</i> continued, Bks. III.—VII. (Feb.—Apr.); Bks. VIII.—XI. (Oct.—Dec.). Dora W. born (Aug. 16th.). S. T. C. starts for Malta, Apr. 2nd. [ <i>Triumphs of Music</i> (Hayley).]   |
| 1805 | 35  | Dove Cottage. <i>The Prelude</i> finished, Bks. XII.—XIV. (Apr., May). Feb. 1804—May 1805 may be regarded as W.'s third period of productive activity. John W. (brother) drowned in the wreck of the <i>Abergavenny</i> (Feb. 5th). W. ascends Helvellyn along with Walter Scott and Humphrey Davy (Oct.). <i>The Waggoner</i> written. <i>Lyrical Ballads</i> , 4th. ed. [ <i>Madoc</i> (Southey). <i>Lay of the Last Minstrel</i> (Scott).]   |
| 1806 | 36  | Dove Cottage. Thomas W. born (June 16th.). S. T. C. returns to England (Aug.). W. moves into the farm-house at Coleorton (lent by Sir G. Beaumont) in October. S. T. C. at Coleorton (Dec. 1806—Feb. 1807). Fourth period of poetic productiveness (Nov. 1806—Feb. 1808). [ <i>Simonidea</i> (Landor). <i>Odes and Epistles</i> (T. Moore).]  |
| 1807 | 37  | Coleorton farm-house. <i>Poems in Two Volumes</i> publ. (prob. early in May). W. visits London (April), returning to Coleorton with W. Scott. Home to Grasmere (Aug.). De Quincey calls at Dove Cottage (Oct.). <i>Poems in Two Volumes</i> savagely attacked in <i>Edinburgh Review</i> . W. visits John H. (wife's brother) at Stockton-on-Tees, where part of <i>The White Doe of Rylstone</i> is written (Dec.). [ <i>Parish Register</i> (Crabbe). <i>Hours of Idleness</i> (Byron).]  |
| 1808 | 38  | Dove Cottage. <i>The White Doe</i> (first draft) finished (Feb.). Visit to London (March). Moves from Dove Cottage into Allan Bank (June). Catherine W. born (Sept. 6th). S. T. C. and De Quincey domesticated at Allan Bank (Sept.). [ <i>Marmion</i> (Scott). Lord Houghton born.]  |
| 1809 | 39  | Allan Bank. <i>The Excursion</i> continued and completed during this and the four following years. Tract on the <i>Convention of Cintra</i> (written Nov., Dec., 1808) publ. (end of May). <i>The Friend</i> publ. by S. T. C. (No. 1 on June 1st) at Penrith. De Quincey settles at Dove Cottage (Nov.). <i>Reply to the Letter of Mathetes</i> (in <i>The Friend</i> ) publ. (Dec.). [ <i>English Bards and Scotch Reviewers</i> (Byron). <i>Gertrude of Wyoming</i> (Campbell). A. Tennyson, Elizabeth Barrett, W. E. Gladstone, Chas. Darwin born.] |
| 1810 | 40  | Allan Bank. <i>Essay on Epitaphs</i> (in <i>The Friend</i> ) publ. (Feb.). <i>Description of the Scenery of the English Lakes</i> , publ. as Intro. to Wilkinson's <i>Select Views</i> (Apr.). William W. born (May 12th). S. T. C. quits   |

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|       |       | Allan Bank for London along with Basil Montagu; estrangement between W. and S. T. C. (Oct.). About this time W.'s poetic ill-repute is at its height (De Quincey). [ <i>The Borough</i> (Crabbe). <i>Lady of the Lake</i> (Scott). <i>Curse of Kehama</i> (Southey).]  |
| 1811  | 41    | Allan Bank. W. moves into the Rectory (May?). Sojourns at Bootle (Aug.: see <i>Poetical Epistle to Sir Geo. Beaumont</i> ). [Thackeray born. Bp. Percy died. <i>Don Roderick</i> (Scott).]   |
| 1812  | 42    | The Rectory. W. seeks through Lord Lonsdale for some office of emolument (Feb.). Visits London and is reconciled to S. T. C. (May). Catherine (June 4th) and Thomas (Dec. 1st) W. died. [Chas. Dickens born. Robert Browning born. <i>Tales in Verse</i> (Crabbe). <i>Count Julian</i> (Landor). <i>Childe Harold</i> , Cantos I., II. (Byron). <i>The Isle of Palms</i> (Wilson).]  |
| 1813  | 43    | The Rectory. Moves into Rydal Mount (March?) Appointed Stamp-Distributor for Westmoreland Co. (March). [ <i>Rocheby</i> ; <i>The Bridal of Triermain</i> (Scott). <i>Remorse</i> (S. T. C.), performed at Drury Lane (Jan.).]  |
| 1814  | 44    | Rydal Mount. Second tour in Scotland (July): <i>Yarrow Visited</i> . <i>The Excursion</i> publ. (Aug.). [ <i>Roderick</i> (Southey). <i>The Feast of the Poets</i> (Leigh Hunt).]  |
| 1815  | 45    | Rydal Mount. <i>The first collective ed. of the poems</i> publ. (March). Visit to London (Apr.). <i>The White Doe of Rylstone</i> publ. (May). [ <i>The Lord of the Isles</i> (Scott).]  |
| 1816  | 46    | Rydal Mount. <i>A Letter to a Friend of Robert Burns</i> publ. <i>Thanksgiving Ode</i> , Jan. 18, 1816, &c., publ. [ <i>Alastor</i> (Shelley). <i>Christabel</i> , &c. (S. T. C.). <i>The Story of Rimini</i> (Leigh Hunt).]   |
| 1817  | 47    | Rydal Mount. W. visits Dr. Christopher W. (brother) at Lambeth Rectory (Dec.). W. and Keats meet at Haydon's "immortal dinner" (Dec). W.'s poetry cordially praised in <i>Blackwood</i> . [ <i>Sibylline Leaves</i> ; <i>Biographia Literaria</i> (S.T.C.). <i>Poems</i> , 1st issue (Keats). <i>Lalla Rookh</i> (Moore). <i>Harold the Dauntless</i> (Scott). <i>The Whistlecraft Poem</i> (J. H. Frere).]  |
| 1818  | 48    | Rydal Mount. Correspondence with Lord Lonsdale on public affairs. <i>Two Addresses to the Freeholders of Westmoreland</i> , publ. at Kendal. [ <i>Childe Harold</i> , Cantos III., IV. <i>Revolt of Islam</i> (Shelley). <i>Poems</i> (Chas. Lamb, in his collected Works). <i>Foliage</i> (Leigh Hunt). <i>Endymion</i> (Keats). <i>Rhododaphne</i> (T. L. Peacock).]   |
| 1819  | 49    | Rydal Mount. J.P. for Westmoreland. <i>Peter Bell</i> publ. (Apr.). <i>The Waggoner</i> publ. (May). [ <i>Don Juan</i> , Canto I., &c. (Byron). <i>Tales of the Hall</i> (Crabbe). <i>Dramatic Scenes</i> (Proctor). <i>Poems—Rosalind and Helen—The Eugeanean Hills—Hymn to Intellectual Beauty</i> (Shelley). Arthur H. Clough born. Chas. Kingsley born.]   |
| 1820  | 50    | Rydal Mount. W., wife and sister start on tour (May). Oxford (May 30th); Lambeth Rectory (June—July). Tour through Switzerland to Italian Lakes and home through Paris (July 11th—Nov. 9th). Fortnight in London; do. at the Lodge, Trinity Coll., Cambr. (where Dr. Christ. W. is now Master); do. at Coleorton Hall. Home at Rydal (Dec. 24). <i>The River Duddon: a Series of Sonnets</i> , &c., publ. (May). Also, <i>The Miscellaneous Poems of W. W.</i> in four vols. (July), and <i>The Excursion</i> , 2nd ed. [ <i>Lamia</i> , <i>Isabella</i> , <i>Hyperion</i> , |

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|      |     | &c. (Keats). <i>Idyllia Heroica Decem</i> (Landor). <i>Prometheus Bound</i> ; <i>The Cenci</i> (Shelley). <i>Marcian Colonna</i> (Proctor).]   |
| 1821 | 51  | Rydal Mount. W. busy with the <i>Ecclesiastical Sketches</i> . [Keats died. <i>Adonais</i> (Shelley). <i>Cain</i> , &c. (Byron). <i>Mirandola</i> ; <i>A Sicilian Story</i> (Proctor).]  |
| 1822 | 52  | Rydal Mount. <i>Memorials of a Tour on the Continent</i> , 1822, and <i>Ecclesiastical Sketches</i> publ. (Feb. or March). Also, <i>Description of the Scenery of the Lakes</i> , now first publ. separately (publ. as appendix to <i>Duddon</i> vol. in 1820; see also under 1810). [Shelley drowned. <i>Hellas</i> (Shelley).]   |
| 1823 | 53  | Rydal Mount. Coleorton Hall (Feb.); London (Mar., Apr.); Lee Priory near Canterbury (May). Tour through the Netherlands (May 16th–June 30th). "Every year shows more and more how strongly W.'s poetry has leavened the rising generation" (Southey). "Up to 1822 the name of W. was trampled under foot; from 1820 to 1830 it was militant; from 1830 to 1835 it has been triumphant" (De Quincey, 1835). [ <i>The Loves of the Angels</i> (T. Moore).] |
| 1824 | 54  | Rydal Mount. London; Cambridge; Coleorton Hall (Apr., May). Tour in N. Wales, and visits to Robt. Jones, now Curate of Glyn Mavry, and to Thos. H. at Hindwell, Radnorshire (Aug., Sept., Oct.). [Byron died.]   |
| 1825 | 55  | Rydal Mount. Coleorton Hall (July). Lowther Castle (Aug.). Alark Watts tries in vain to get a London publisher for an ed. of W.'s collected poems.   |
| 1826 | 56  | Rydal Mount. <i>The Excursion</i> , and the shorter poems, carefully revised and corrected, and the <i>Miscellaneous Sonnets</i> re-arranged in groups on the principle of mutual illustration, for the projected five-vol. ed.  |
| 1827 | 57  | Rydal Mount. Sir Geo. Beaumont died (Feb.) <i>An ed. in five vols. (the third collective ed.) of the poems</i> publ., including (for the first time) <i>The Excursion</i> . [Poems (T. Hood). <i>The Christian Year</i> (Keble).]  |
| 1828 | 58  | Rydal Mount. W., Dora W., and S. T. C. go on a fortnight's tour up the Rhine (June). John W. takes holy orders, and after a time obtains from Lord Lonsdale the living of Moresby, Cumberland.   |
| 1829 | 59  | Rydal Mount. Carriage tour through Ireland with J. Marshall, M.P. for Leeds (Aug., Sept.) Dorothy W.'s health begins to fail.  |
| 1830 | 60  | Rydal Mount. Felicia Hemans (July) and W. Rowan Hamilton (Aug.) visit W. Rev. John W. marries dau. of H. Curwen, Workington Hall, Cumberland (Oct.). W. rides from Lancaster to Cambridge (Nov.); London (Dec.). [Hazlitt died. <i>Poems, chiefly Lyrical</i> (A. Tennyson).]  |
| 1831 | 61  | Buxted Rectory, Sussex (the home of Dr. Christ. W.); home at Rydal (June). W., Dora W., and Charles W. (nephew), aft. Bishop of S. Andrews, visit Sir Walter Scott at Abbotsford (Sept. 21st), and travel through the Highlands. <i>Yarrow Revisited</i> . [ <i>Corn Law Rhymes</i> (Eb. Elliott).]  |
| 1832 | 62  | Rydal Mount. Moresby Rectory (June), where W. is visited by W. Savage Landor. Correspondence on Reform with Lord Lonsdale, Henry Taylor, and H. Crabb Robinson (Sept., Oct.). <i>Edition in four vols. (the fourth collective ed.) of the poems</i> publ. [Sir W. Scott died (Sept. 21st). Rev. Geo. Crabbe died. Dr. Arnold purchases For How. <i>English Songs</i> (B. W. Proctor).]   |

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| 1833 | 63  | Rydal Mount. Moysesby Rectory (Apr.), where several of the <i>Evening Voluntaries</i> were written. Tour in the Isle of Man and in Scotland with John W. and H. Crabb Robinson (Sept., Oct.). [ <i>Pauline</i> (R. Browning). <i>Poems</i> (Hartley Coleridge).]  |
| 1834 | 64  | Rydal Mount. [S. T. C. died (July 25th). Chas. Lamb died (Dec. 27th). <i>Italy</i> completed (first draft publ. 1822): Rogers.]   |
| 1835 | 65  | Rydal Mount. London (Feb., Mar.), Cambridge (Apr.). Sarah Hutchinson (sister-in-law) died (June 23rd). W. visits Thos. H. at Brinsop Court, Herefordshire (Aug.—Nov.). <i>Yarrow Revisited and other Poems</i> publ. (prob. Jan.), containing the <i>Itinerary Sonnets</i> of 1831, and those of 1833; <i>Evening Voluntaries</i> ; <i>The Egyptian Maid</i> , &c. [Mrs. Hemans died. Jas. Hogg died. Rev. Robt. Jones died. <i>Prometheus Bound</i> , &c. (Eliz. Barrett).]                          |
| 1836 | 66  | Rydal Mount. London (May), where W. attends first night of <i>Ion</i> (Talfourd). Back at Rydal in June; and from June—Dec. engaged in revising poems for the projected stereotyped ed. [ <i>Pericles and Aspasia</i> (Landon).]  |
| 1837 | 67  | Rydal Mount. <i>New ed. in six vols. (the fifth collective ed.) of the poems</i> (Vols. I., II., 1836; Vols. III.—VI., 1837). Poems reprinted in the United States, ed. Henry Reed. Tour with H. Crabb Robinson through France and Italy to Rome (March—Aug.). Brinsop Court (Sept.). [Strafford (R. Browning). W. S. Landon, in requital of W.'s fancied depreciation of Southey, parodies <i>We are Seven</i> , and prints, the <i>Satire on Satirists</i> , and <i>Admonition to Detractors</i> .] |
| 1838 | 68  | Rydal Mount. D. C. L. Univ. Durham (summer.) <i>The Sonnets of W. W. collected in one vol.</i> , publ. (June). Lengthy correspondence with Talfourd, H. C. Robinson, W. E. Gladstone and others on the copyright question. Julius Hare dedicates the 2nd edition of <i>Guesses at Truth</i> to W. [ <i>The Seraphim</i> , &c. (Eliz. Barrett).]   |
| 1839 | 69  | Rydal Mount. W. petitions the House of Commons in support of Talfourd's Copyright Bill (May). D. C. L. Oxford (July). Presented by Keble, and greeted with acclamation. [ <i>Roman of the Page</i> (Eliz. Barrett).]  |
| 1840 | 70  | Rydal Mount. Pickersgill paints a portrait of W. for the Drayton Manor Gallery (summer). Miss Fenwick settles at Rydal Mount (Oct.). [Francis Hare died. <i>Sordello</i> (R. Browning). <i>Fugitive Verses</i> (Joanna Baillie).]   |
| 1841 | 71  | Rydal Mount. W. and his family visit Taunton and Brinsop (Apr.). Dora W. married to Edw. Quillinan (May 11th) at Bath. W. revisits old haunts—Alfoxden, Tintern, Goodrich Castle, &c.; then to London (Aug.), and home to Rydal (Sept.). [ <i>Bells and Pomegranates</i> (R. Browning), Nos. i—viii. (1841—1846).]  |
| 1842 | 72  | Rydal Mount. London (May, June). <i>Poems, Chiefly of Early and Late Years</i> , publ. (Apr.). Resigns the Stamp-Distributorship (July). Pension of £300 per annum from Civil List conferred on W. by Sir Robt. Peel (Oct.). [ <i>Poems in two Volumes</i> (A. Tennyson).]  |
| 1843 | 73  | Rydal Mount. At home (spring and summer). The Quillinans at Windermere, Accepts the Laureateship (Apr.). [Robt. Southey died (March 21st). <i>Song of the Shirt</i> (T. Hood). <i>Lays of Ancient Rome</i> (Macaulay).]   |

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| 1844 | 74  | Rydal Mount. Keble dedicates his <i>Prælectiones Academicæ</i> to W. (March). Tour through the Duddon Valley with the Quillinans and Lady Richardson (Sept.). [Thos. Campbell died. <i>Poems</i> , 2 vols. (Eliz. Barrett). <i>The Bridge of Sighs</i> (T. Hood).]   |
| 1845 | 75  | Rydal Mount. The Quillinans go to Oporto (spring). W. attends Levée and State Ball in London (May). At Brinsop Court (Sept., Oct.). <i>New ed. of the poems in one vol.</i> , royal 8vo. <i>Kendal and Windermere Railway: Two Letters Reprinted from the Morning Post</i> , publ. at Kendal (Jan.; or, possibly, Dec., 1844. [Thos. Hood died.] |
| 1846 | 76  | Rydal Mount. Elected hon. mem. Royal Irish Academy (March). Nominated for Lord Rectorship of Glasgow Univ., and obtained a majority of twenty-one votes over Lord John Russell, who however was seated by means of the Sub-Rector's vote. The Quillinans return and settle at Loughrigg Holm (July). [ <i>Hellenics</i> (W. S. Landor).]         |
| 1847 | 77  | Rydal Mount. William W. marries Miss Fanny E. Graham of Brighton (Jan.). Dora Quillinan died (July 9th). <i>The Installation Ode</i> performed in the Senate-House, Cambr. (July). [ <i>The Princess</i> (A. Tennyson).]   |
| 1848 | 78  | Rydal Mount. H. Crabb Robinson comes down to Rydal, as in 1835 and 1838, for the Christmas season. [ <i>The Saint's Tragedy</i> (C. Kingsley). <i>The Bothie of Tober-na-vuolich</i> (A. H. Clough). <i>Casa Guidi Windows</i> (Eliz. Barrett Browning).]  |
| 1849 | 79  | Rydal Mount. Hartley Coleridge died, Jan. 6th. W. and wife visit Thos. Hutchinson at West Malvern (June). <i>An ed. of the poems, in six vols.</i> , giving the results of W.'s final revision of the text, publ. 1849-50. [ <i>The Strayed Reveller</i> , &c. (M. Arnold). <i>Ambarvalia</i> (A. H. Clough).]                                   |
| 1850 | 80  | WILLIAM WORDSWORTH DIED, April 23rd. Buried in Grasmere Churchyard (April 27th). <i>The Prelude; or, Growth of a Poet's Mind</i> publ. [Rev. W. L. Bowles died.]   |

The stereotyped edition of the poems in six volumes, published in 1836-7, was re-issued, with a revised and slightly altered text, in 1843; and this edition of 1843 again was also reprinted in 1842, 1843, 1846, and 1849. To the six-vol. ed. of 1842 the volume, originally published under the title of *Poems, Chiefly of Early and Late Years*, was added in the course of that same year, with the title: *The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth. Volume VII.* London: Edward Moxon. 1842.

The one-vol. edition of 1845 has also been frequently reprinted. After 1850 the contents were enlarged by the addition of *The Prelude*, and of the nine poems first published in 1849-50. Moxon's familiar one-vol. edition,—that which has a prefatory notice from the pen of Mr. W. M. Rossetti,—is in fact but a re-issue of this ed. of 1845, with *The Prelude*, but without the poems of 1849-50.

In 1857 a six-volume edition of the poems appeared, in which the notes dictated in 1843 by the poet to Miss Fenwick were first published, being prefixed to the individual pieces to which they severally refer.

*The Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff*, mentioned under 1793 in the foregoing Table, remained unpublished until 1876, when it was included in the collective edition of *Wordsworth's Prose Works* put forth by Dr. A. B. Grosart.

Besides the prose writings already noticed, Wordsworth wrote (1) the famous *Preface* to the second edition (1800) of the *Lyrical Ballads*; (2) the *Appendix on Poetic Diction* to the third edition (1802); (3) the *Preface to The Excursion*; (4) the *Preface and the Essay Supplementary to the Preface* of the edition of 1815; and (5) the *Postscript to the Yarrow Revisited* volume. Many notes also from Wordsworth's pen appeared in the several successive issues of his poems between 1793 and 1845; of which notes the poet subsequently saw fit to cancel not a few. One or two of these, which seemed well worth restoring, will be found in this volume amongst the notes of ed. 1849-50, from which they are distinguished by the addition of their proper date after the signature (W.).

T. H.

<sup>1</sup> All of these will be found in the present edition.

# POEMS

BY

## WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

### POEMS WRITTEN IN YOUTH.

Of the Poems in this class, "THE EVENING WALK" and "DESCRIPTIVE SKETCHES" were first published in 1793. They are reprinted with some alterations that were chiefly made very soon after their publication.

This notice, which was written some time ago, scarcely applies to the Poem, "Descriptive Sketches," as it now stands. The corrections, though numerous, are not, however, such as to prevent its retaining with propriety a place in the class of Juvenile Pieces<sup>1</sup>.

1836.

#### I.

##### EXTRACT.

FROM THE CONCLUSION OF A POEM, COMPOSED IN ANTICIPATION OF LEAVING SCHOOL.

[Composed 1786.—Published 1815.]

DEAR native regions, I foretell,  
From what I feel at this farewell,  
That, wheresoe'er my steps may tend,  
And whensoe'er my course shall end,  
If in that hour a single tie  
Survive of local sympathy,  
My soul will cast the backward view,  
The longing look alone on you.

Thus, while the Sun sinks down to rest  
Far in the regions of the west,  
Though to the vale no parting beam  
Be given, not one memorial gleam,  
A lingering light he fondly throws  
On the dear hills where first he rose.

#### II.

##### WRITTEN IN VERY EARLY YOUTH.

[Composed 1786 (?).—Published *Morning Post*  
February 13, 1802; ed. 1807.]

CALM is all nature as a resting wheel.  
The kine are couched upon the dewy  
grass;  
The horse alone, seen dimly as I pass,  
Is cropping audibly his later meal:  
Dark is the ground; a slumber seems to  
steal  
O'er vale, and mountain, and the starless  
sky.  
Now, in this blank of things, a har-  
mony,  
Home-felt, and home-created, comes to  
heal  
That grief for which the senses still  
supply  
Fresh food; for only then, when me-  
mory

<sup>1</sup> See APPENDIX: *Poems of 1793*, pp. 591-617.

Is hushed, am I at rest. My Friends!  
 restrain  
 Those busy cares that would allay my  
 pain;  
 Oh! leave me to myself, nor let me feel  
 The officious touch that makes me droop  
 again.

## III.

AN EVENING WALK<sup>1</sup>.

ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG LADY.

[Composed 1787-89.—Published 1793.]

General Sketch of the Lakes—Author's regret of  
 his Youth which was passed amongst them—  
 Short description of Noon—Cascade—Noon-  
 tide Retreat—Precipice and sloping Lights—  
 Face of Nature as the Sun declines—Moun-  
 tain-farm, and the Cock—Slate-quarry—Sun-  
 set—Superstition of the Country connected  
 with that moment—Swans—Female Beggar—  
 Twilight-sounds—Western Lights—Spirits—  
 Night—Moonlight—Hope—Night-sounds—  
 Conclusion.

FAR from my dearest Friend, 'tis mine to  
 rove  
 Through bare grey dell, high wood, and  
 pastoral cove;  
 Where Derwent rests, and listens to the  
 roar  
 That stuns the tremulous cliffs of high  
 Lodore;  
 Where peace to Grasmere's lonely island  
 leads,  
 To willowy hedge-rows, and to emerald  
 meads;  
 Leads to her bridge, rude church, and  
 cottaged grounds,  
 Her rocky sheepwalks, and her woodland  
 bounds;  
 Where, undisturbed by winds, Winander<sup>2</sup>  
 sleeps;  
 'Mid clustering isles, and holly-sprinkled  
 steeps;

Where twilight glens endear my Esth-  
 waite's shore,  
 And memory of departed pleasures, more.

Fair scenes, erewhile, I taught, a happy  
 child,  
 The echoes of your rocks my carols wild:  
 The spirit sought not then, in cherished  
 sadness,  
 A cloudy substitute for failing gladness.  
 In youth's keen eye the livelong day was  
 bright,  
 The sun at morning, and the stars at night,  
 Alike, when first the bitter'n hollow bill  
 Was heard, or woodcocks<sup>2</sup> roamed the  
 moonlight hill

In thoughtless gaiety I coursed the  
 plain,  
 And hope itself was all I knew of pain;  
 For then the inexperienced heart would  
 beat  
 At times, while young Content forsook  
 her seat,  
 And wild Impatience, pointing upward,  
 showed,  
 Through passes yet unreach'd, a brighter  
 road.  
 Alas! the idle tale of man is found  
 Depicted in the dial's moral round;  
 Hope with reflection blends her social  
 rays  
 To gild the total tablet of his days;  
 Yet still, the sport of some malignant  
 power,  
 He knows but from its shade the present  
 hour.

But why, ungrateful, dwell on idle pain?  
 To show what pleasures yet to me remain,  
 Say, will my Friend, with unrequitant  
 ear,  
 The history of a poet's evening hear?

When, in the south, the wan noon,  
 brooding still,  
 Breathed a pale steam around the glar-  
 ing hill.

<sup>1</sup> So many and so important changes have been made in this Poem since its first appearance, that it has been thought well to reprint the original text of 1793. See Appendix, page 592.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> These lines are only applicable to the middle part of that lake.

<sup>2</sup> In the beginning of winter these mountains are frequented by woodcocks, which in dark nights retire into the woods.

And shades of deep-embattled clouds were  
seen,  
Spotting the northern cliffs with lights  
between; 40  
When crowding cattle, checked by rails  
that make  
A fence far stretched into the shallow  
lake,  
Lashed the cool water with their restless  
tails,  
Or from high points of rock looked out  
for fanning gales;  
When school-boys stretched their length  
upon the green; 45  
And round the broad-spread oak, a glim-  
mering scene,  
In the rough fern-clad park, the herded  
deer  
Shook the still-twinkling tail and glanc-  
ing ear;  
When horses in the sunburnt intake<sup>1</sup>  
stood,  
And vainly eyed below the tempting  
flood, 50  
Or tracked the passenger, in mute distress,  
With forward neck the closing gate to  
press—  
Then, while I wandered where the hud-  
dling rill  
Brightens with water-breaks the hollow  
ghyll<sup>2</sup>  
As by enchantment, an obscure retreat  
Opened at once, and stayed my devious  
feet. 56  
While thick above the rill the branches  
close,  
In rocky basin its wild waves repose,  
Inverted shrubs, and moss of gloomy  
green,  
Cling from the rocks, with pale wood-  
weeds between; 60  
And its own twilight softens the whole  
scene,  
Save where aloft the subtle sunbeams  
shine

On withered briars that o'er the crags  
recline;  
Save where, with sparkling foam, a small  
cascade  
Illumines, from within, the leafy shade;  
Beyond, along the vista of the brook, 66  
Where antique roots its bustling course  
o'erlook,  
The eye reposes on a secret bridge,<sup>3</sup>  
Half grey, half shagged with ivy to its  
ridge;  
There, bending o'er the stream, the listless  
swain 70  
Lingers behind his disappearing wain.  
—Did Sabine grace adorn my living line,  
Bandusia's praise, wild stream, should  
yield to thine!  
Never shall ruthless minister of death  
'Mid thy soft glooms the glittering steel  
unsheath; 75  
No goblets shall, for thee, be crowned  
with flowers,  
No kid with piteous outcry thrill thy  
bowers;  
The mystic shapes that by thy margin rove  
A more benignant sacrifice approve—  
A mind that, in a calm angelic mood 80  
Of happy wisdom, meditating good,  
Beholds, of all from her high powers  
required,  
Much done, and much designed, and more  
desired,—  
Harmonious thoughts, a soul by truth  
refined,  
Entire affection for all human kind. 85

Dear Brook, farewell! To-morrow's  
noon again  
Shall hide me, wooing long thy wildwood  
strain;  
But now the sun has gained his western  
road,  
And eve's mild hour invites my steps  
abroad.

While, near the midway cliff, the sil-  
vered kite 90

<sup>1</sup> The word *intake* is local, and signifies a mountain-inclosure.

<sup>2</sup> Ghyll is also, I believe, a term confined to this country: ghyll and dingle have the same meaning.

<sup>3</sup> The reader, who has made the tour of this country, will recognise, in this description, the features which characterise the lower waterfall in the grounds of Rydal.

In many a whistling circle wheels her  
flight;  
Slant watery lights, from parting clouds,  
apace  
Travel along the precipice's base;  
Cheering its naked waste of scattered  
stone,  
By lichens grey, and scanty moss, o'er-  
grown; 95  
Where scarce the foxglove peeps, or  
thistle's beard;  
And restless stone-chat, all day long, is  
heard.

How pleasant, as the sun declines, to  
view  
The spacious landscape change in form  
and hue!  
Here, vanish, as in mist, before a flood 100  
Of bright obscurity, hill, lawn, and  
wood;  
There, objects, by the searching beams  
betrayed,  
Come forth, and here retire in purple  
shade;  
Even the white stems of birch, the cottage  
white,  
Soften their glare before the mellow  
light; 105  
The skiffs, at anchor where with umbrage  
wide  
Yon chestnuts half the latticed boat-house  
hide,  
Shed from their sides, that face the sun's  
slant beam,  
Strong flakes of radiance on the tremulous  
stream:  
Raised by yon travelling flock, a dusty  
cloud 110  
Mounts from the road, and spreads its  
moving shroud;  
The shepherd, all involved in wreaths of  
fire,  
Now shows a shadowy speck, and now is  
lost entire.

Into a gradual calm the breezes sink,  
A blue rim borders all the lake's still  
brink; 115  
There doth the twinkling aspen's foliage  
sleep,

And insects clothe, like dust, the glassy  
deep:  
And now, on every side, the surface  
breaks  
Into blue spots, and slowly lengthening  
streaks;  
Here, plots of sparkling water tremble  
bright 120  
With thousand thousand twinkling points  
of light;  
There, waves that, hardly weltering, die  
away,  
Tip their smooth ridges with a softer ray;  
And now the whole wide lake in deep  
repose  
Is hushed, and like a burnished mirror  
glows, 125  
Save where, along the shady western  
marge,  
Coasts, with industrious oar, the charcoal  
barge.

Their panniered train a group of potters  
goad,  
Winding from side to side 'up the steep  
road;  
The peasant, from yon cliff of fearful edge  
Shot, down the headlong path darts with  
his sledge; 131  
Bright beams the lonely mountain-horse  
illumine  
Feeding 'mid purple heath, "green  
rings,"<sup>1</sup> and broom;  
While the sharp slope the slackened team  
confounds,  
Downward the ponderous timber-wain re-  
sounds; 135  
In foamy breaks the rill, with merry song,  
Dashed o'er the rough rock, lightly leaps  
along;  
From lonesome chapel at the mountain's  
feet  
Three humble bells their rustic chime re-  
peat;  
Sounds from the water-side the hammer-  
ed boat; 140  
And *blasted* quarry thunders, heard re-  
mote! \*

<sup>1</sup> "Vivid rings of green."—GREENWOOD'S *Poem on Shooting*.

Even here, amid the sweep of endless  
woods,  
Blue pomp of lakes, high cliffs and falling  
floods,  
Not undelightful are the simplest charms,  
Found by the grassy door of mountain-  
farms. 145

Sweetly ferocious,<sup>1</sup> round his native  
walks,  
Pride of his sister-wives, the monarch  
stalks;  
Spur-clad his nervous feet, and firm his  
tread;  
A crest of purple tops the warrior's head.  
Bright sparks his black and rolling eye-  
ball hurls 150  
Afar, his tail he closes and unfurls;  
On tiptoe reared, he strains his clarion  
throat,  
Threatened by faintly-answering farms  
remote:  
Again with his shrill voice the mountain  
rings,  
While, flapped with conscious pride, re-  
sound his wings! 155

Where, mixed with graceful birch, the  
sombrous pine  
And yew-tree o'er the silver rocks recline,  
I love to mark the quarry's moving trains,  
Dwarf panniered steeds, and men, and  
numerous wains: 159  
How busy all the enormous hive within,  
While Echo dallies with its various din!  
Some (hear you not their chisels' clinking  
sound?)  
Toil, small as pygmies in the gulf pro-  
found;  
Some, dim between the lofty cliffs de-  
cried,  
O'erwalk the slender plank from side to  
side; 165  
These, by the pale-blue rocks that cease-  
less ring,  
In airy baskets hanging, work and sing.

Just where a cloud above the mountain  
rears  
An edge all flame, the broadening sun  
appears;  
A long blue bar its ægis orb divides, 170  
And breaks the spreading of its golden  
tides;  
And now that orb has touched the purple  
steep,  
Whose softened image penetrates the deep.  
'Cross the calm lake's blue shades the  
cliffs aspire,  
With towers and woods, a "prospect all  
on fire;" 175  
While coves and secret hollows, through  
a ray  
Of fainter gold, a purple gleam betray.  
Each slip of lawn the broken rocks  
between  
Shines in the light with more than earthly  
green:  
Deep yellow beams the scattered stems  
illumine, 180  
Far in the level forest's central gloom:  
Waving his hat, the shepherd, from the  
vale,  
Directs his winding dog the cliffs to  
scale,—  
The dog, loud barking, 'mid the glittering  
rocks,  
Hunts, where his master points, the inter-  
cepted flocks. 185  
Where oaks o'erhang the road the radiance  
shoots  
On tawny earth, wild weeds, and twisted  
roots;  
The druid-stones a brightened ring unfold;  
And all the babbling brooks are liquid  
gold;  
Sunk to a curve, the day-star lessens  
still, 190  
Gives one bright glance, and drops behind  
the hill.<sup>2</sup>

In these secluded vales, if village fame,  
Confirmed by hoary hairs, belief may  
claim;  
When up the hills, as now, retired the  
light,

<sup>1</sup> "Dolcemente feroce."—Tasso.—In this description of the cock, I remembered a spirited one of the same animal in *L'Agriculture, ou Les Géorgiques Françaises*, of M. Rossuet.

<sup>2</sup> From Thomson.

Strange apparitions mocked the shepherd's sight. 195

The form appears of one that spurs his steed

Midway along the hill with desperate speed;

Unhurt pursues his lengthened flight, while all

Attend, at every stretch, his headlong fall.

Anon, appears a brave, a gorgeous show

Of horsemen-shadows moving to and fro;

At intervals imperial banners stream,

And now the van reflects the solar beam;

The rear through iron brown betrays a sullen gleam.

While silent stands the admiring crowd below, 205

Silent the visionary warriors go,

Winding in ordered pomp their upward way,<sup>1</sup>

Till the last banner of their long array

Has disappeared, and every trace is fled

Of splendour—save the beacon's spiry head 210

Tipt with eye's latest gleam of burning red.

Now, while the solemn evening shadows sail,

On slowly-waving pinions, down the vale;

And, fronting the bright west, yon oak entwines

Its darkening boughs and leaves in stronger lines; 215

'Tis pleasant near the tranquil lake to stray

Where, winding on along some secret bay,

The swan uplifts his chest, and backward flings

His neck, a varying arch, between his towering wings:

The eye that marks the gliding creature sees 220

How graceful, pride can be, and how majestic, ease.

<sup>1</sup> See a description of an appearance of this kind in Clark's Survey of the Lakes, accompanied by vouchers of its veracity, that may amuse the reader.

While tender cares and mild domestic loves

With furtive watch pursue her as she moves,

The female with a meeker charm succeeds,

And her brown little-ones around her leads, 225

Nibbling the water lilies as they pass,

Or playing wanton with the floating grass.

She, in a mother's care, her beauty's pride

Forgetting, calls the wearied to her side;

Alternately they mount her back, and rest 230

Close by her mantling wings' embraces prest.

Long may they float upon this flood serene;

Theirs be these holms untrodden, still, and green,

Where leafy shades fence off the blustering gale,

And breathes in peace the lily of the vale! 235

Yon isle, which feels not even the milk-maid's feet,

Yet hears her song, "by distance made more sweet,"

Yon isle conceals their home, their hut-like bower;

Green water-rushes overspread the floor;

Long grass and willows form the woven wall, 240

And swings above the roof the poplar tall.

Thence issuing often with unwieldy stalk,

They crush with broad black feet their flowery walk;

Or, from the neighbouring water, hear at morn 245

The hound, the horse's tread, and mellow horn;

Involve their serpent-necks in changeful rings,

Rolled wantonly between their slippery wings,

Or, starting up with noise and rude delight,

Force half upon the wave their cumbrous flight.

Fair Swan! by all a mother's joys  
caressed, 250  
Haply some wretch has eyed, and called  
thee blessed;  
When with her infants, from some shady  
seat  
By the lake's edge, she rose—to face the  
noon-tide heat;  
Or taught their limbs along the dusty  
road  
A few short steps to totter with their  
load. 255

I see her now, denied to lay her head,  
On cold blue nights, in hut or straw-built  
shed,  
Turn to a silent smile their sleepy cry,  
By pointing to the gliding moon on high.  
—When low-hung clouds each star of  
summer hide, 260  
And fireless are the valleys far and wide,  
Where the brook brawls along the public  
road  
Dark with bat-haunted ashes stretching  
broad,  
Oft has she taught them on her lap to lay  
The shining glow-worm; or, in heedless  
play, 265  
Toss it from hand to hand, disquieted;  
While others, not unseen, are free to shed  
Green unmolested light upon their mossy  
bed.

Oh! when the sleety showers her path  
assail,  
And like a torrent roars the headstrong  
gale; 270  
No more her breath can thaw their fingers  
cold,  
Their frozen arms her neck no more can  
fold;  
Weak roof a cowering form two babes to  
shield,  
And faint the fire a dying heart can  
yield!  
Press the sad kiss, fond mother! vainly  
fears 275  
Thy flooded cheek to wet them with its  
tears;  
No tears can chill them, and no bosom  
warms,

Thy breast their death-bed, coffined in  
thine arms!

Sweet are the sounds that mingle from  
afar,  
Heard by calm lakes, as peeps the folding  
star, 280  
Where the duck dabbles 'mid the rustling  
sedge,  
And feeding pike starts from the water's  
edge,  
Or the swan stirs the reeds, his neck and  
bill  
Wetting, that drip upon the water still;  
And heron, as resounds the trodden  
shore, 285  
Shoots upward, darting his long neck  
before.

Now, with religious awe, the farewell  
light  
Blends with the solemn colouring of  
night;  
'Mid groves of clouds that crest the moun-  
tain's brow,  
And round the west's proud lodge their  
shadows throw, 290  
Like Una shining on her gloomy way,  
The half-seen form of Twilight roams  
astray;  
Shedding, through paly loop-holes mild  
and small,  
Gleams that upon the lake's still bosom  
fall;  
Soft o'er the surface creep those lustres  
pale 295  
Tracking the motions of the fitful gale.  
With restless interchange at once the  
bright  
Wins on the shade, the shade upon the  
light.  
No favoured eye was e'er allowed to  
gaze  
On lovelier spectacle in faery days; 300  
When gentle Spirits urged a sportive  
chase,  
Brushing with lucid wands the water's face:  
While music, stealing round the glimmer-  
ing deeps,  
Charmed the tall circle of the enchanted  
steeps.

—The lights are vanished from the watery  
plains : 305

No wreck of all the pageantry remains.  
Unheeded night has overcome the vales :  
On the dark earth the wearied vision  
fails ;

The latest lingerer of the forest train,  
The lone black fir, forsakes the faded  
plain ; 310

Last evening sight, the cottage smoke, no  
more,  
Lost in the thickened darkness, glimmers  
hoar ;

And, towering from the sullen dark-brown  
mere,  
Like a black wall, the mountain-steeps  
appear.

—Now o'er the soothed accordant heart  
we feel 315

A sympathetic twilight slowly steal,  
And ever, as we fondly muse, we find  
The soft gloom deepening on the tranquil  
mind.

Stay! pensive, sadly-pleasing visions,  
stay!

Ah no! as fades the vale, they fade  
away : 320

Yet still the tender, vacant gloom re-  
mains ;

Still the cold cheek its shuddering tear  
retains.

The bird, who ceased, with fading light,  
to thread

Silent the hedge or steamy rivulet's bed,  
From his grey re-appearing tower shall  
soon 325

Salute with gladsome note the rising  
moon,

While with a hoary light she frosts the  
ground,

And pours a deeper blue to Æther's  
bound ;

Pleased, as she moves, her pomp of clouds  
to fold

In robes of azure, fleecy-white, and gold.

Above yon eastern hill, where darkness  
broods 331

O'er all its vanished dells, and lawns, and  
woods ;

Where but a mass of shade the sight can  
trace,

Even now she shows, half-veiled, her love-  
ly face :

Across the gloomy valley flings her  
light, 335

Far to the western slopes with hamlets  
white ;

And gives, where woods the chequered  
upland strew,

To the green corn of summer, autumn's  
hue.

Thus Hope, first pouring from her bless-  
ed horn

Hèr dawn, far lovelier than the moon's  
own morn, 340

Till higher mounted, strives in vain to  
cheer

The weary hills, impervious, blackening  
near ;

Yet does she still, undaunted, throw the  
while

On darling spots remote her tempting  
smile.

Even now she decks for me a distant  
scene, 345

(For dark and broad the gulf of time be-  
tween)

Gilding that cottage with her fondest ray,  
(Sole bourn, sole wish, sole object of my  
way ;

How fair its lawns and sheltering woods  
appear !

How sweet its streamlet murmurs in  
mine ear ! 350

Where we, my Friend, to happy days  
shall rise,

Till our small share of hardly-paining  
sighs 355

(For sighs will ever trouble human breath)  
Creep hushed into the tranquil breast of  
death.

But now the clear bright Moon her  
zenith gains, 355

And, rimy without speck, extend the  
plains :

The deepest cleft the mountain's front  
displays

Scarcely hides a shadow from her searching  
 rays;  
 From the dark-blue faint silvery threads  
 divide  
 The hills, while gleams below the azure  
 tide; 360  
 Time softly treads; throughout the land-  
 scape breathes  
 A peace enlivened, not disturbed, by  
 wreaths  
 Of charcoal-smoke, that, o'er the fallen  
 wood,  
 Steal down the hill, and spread along the  
 flood.

The song of mountain-streams, unheard  
 by day, 365  
 Now hardly heard, beguiles my home-  
 ward way.  
 Air listens, like the sleeping water, still,  
 To catch the spiritual music of the hill,  
 Broke only by the slow clock tolling deep,  
 Or shout that wakes the ferry-man from  
 sleep, 370  
 The echoed hoof nearing the distant  
 shore,  
 The boat's first motion—made with dash-  
 ing oar;  
 Sound of closed gate, across the water  
 borne,  
 Hurrying the timid hare through rustling  
 corn; 374  
 The sportive outcry of the mocking owl;  
 And at long intervals the mill-dog's howl;  
 The distant forge's swinging thump pro-  
 found;  
 Or yell, in the deep woods, of lonely  
 hound.

## IV.

## LINES

WRITTEN WHILE SAILING IN A BOAT AT  
 EVENING.

[Composed 1789.—Published 1798.]

How richly glows the water's breast  
 Before us, tinged with evening hues,  
 While, facing thus the crimson west,  
 The boat her silent course pursues!  
 And see how dark the backward stream!  
 A little moment past so smiling! 6

And still, perhaps, with faithless gleam,  
 Some other loiterers beguiling.

Such views the youthful Bard allure;  
 But, heedless of the following gloom, 10  
 He deems their colours shall endure  
 Till peace go with him to the tomb.  
 —And let him nurse his fond deceit,  
 And what if he must die in sorrow!  
 Who would not cherish dreams so sweet,  
 Though grief and pain may come to-  
 morrow? 16

## V.

## REMEMBRANCE OF COLLINS,

COMPOSED UPON THE THAMES NEAR  
 RICHMOND.

[Composed 1789.—Published 1798.]

GLIDE gently, thus for ever glide,  
 O Thames! that other bards may see  
 As lovely visions by thy side  
 As now, fair river! come to me.  
 O glide, fair stream! for ever so, 5  
 Thy quiet soul on all bestowing,  
 Till all our minds for ever flow  
 As thy deep waters now are flowing.

Vain thought!—Yet be as now thou art,  
 That in thy waters may be seen 10  
 The image of a poet's heart,  
 How bright, how solemn, how serene!  
 Such as did once the Poet bless,  
 Who, murmuring here a later<sup>1</sup> ditty,  
 Could find no refuge from distress 15  
 But in the milder grief of pity.

Now let us, as we float along,  
 For him suspend the dashing oar;  
 And pray that never child of song  
 May know that Poet's sorrows more. 20  
 How calm! how still! the only sound,  
 The dripping of the oar suspended!  
 —The evening darkness gathers round  
 By virtue's holiest Powers attended.

<sup>1</sup> Collins' Ode on the death of Thomson, the last written, I believe, of the poems which were published during his life-time. This Ode is also alluded to in the next stanza.

## VI.

DESCRIPTIVE SKETCHES<sup>1</sup>TAKEN DURING A PEDESTRIAN TOUR AMONG  
THE ALPS.

[Composed 1791-92.—Published 1793.]

TO

THE REV. ROBERT JONES,

FELLOW OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE,  
CAMBRIDGE.

DEAR SIR,

However desirous I might have been of giving you proofs of the high place you hold in my esteem, I should have been cautious of wounding your delicacy by thus publicly addressing you, had not the circumstance of our having been companions among the Alps seemed to give this dedication a propriety sufficient to do away any scruples which your modesty might otherwise have suggested.

In inscribing this little work to you I consult my heart. You know well how great is the difference between two companions lolling in a post-chaise and two travellers plodding slowly along the road, side by side, each with his little knapsack of necessities upon his shoulders. How much more of heart between the two latter!

I am happy in being conscious that I shall have one reader who will approach the conclusion of these few pages with regret. You they must certainly interest, in reminding you of moments to which you can hardly look back without a pleasure not the less dear from a shade of melancholy. You will meet with few images without recollecting the spot where we observed them together; consequently, whatever is feeble in my design, or spiritless in my colouring, will be amply supplied by your own memory.

With still greater propriety I might have inscribed to you a description of some of the features of your native mountains, through which we have wandered together, in the same manner, with so much pleasure. But the sea-sunsets, which give such splendour to the vale of Clwyd, Snowdon, the chair of Idris, the quiet village of

Bethgelert, Menai and her Druids, the Alpine steepes of the Conway, and the still more interesting windings of the wizard stream of the Dee, remain yet untouched. Apprehensive that my pencil may never be exercised on these subjects, I cannot let slip this opportunity of thus publicly assuring you with how much affection and esteem,

I am, dear Sir,

Most sincerely yours,

London, 1793.

W. WORDSWORTH

Happiness (if she had been to be found on earth) among the charms of Nature—Pleasures of the pedestrian Traveller—Author crosses France to the Alps—Present state of the Grande Chartreuse—Lake of Como—Time, Sunset—Same Scene, Twilight—Same Scene, Morning; its voluptuous Character; Old man and forest-cottage music—River Tusa—Via Mala and Grison Gipsy—Schellenen-thal—Lake of Uri—Stormy sunset—Chapel of William Tell—Force of local emotion—Chamois-chaser—View of the higher Alps—Manner of life of a Swiss mountaineer, interspersed with views of the higher Alps—Golden age of the Alps—Life and views continued—Ranz des Vaches, famous Swiss Air—Abbey of Einsiedlen and its pilgrims—Valley of Chamouny—Mont Blanc—Slavery of Savoy—Influence of liberty on cottage-happiness—France—Wish for the Extirpation of slavery—Conclusion.

WERE there, below, a spot of holy ground  
Where from distress a refuge might be  
found,

And solitude prepare the soul for heaven;  
Sure, nature's God that spot to man had  
given

Where falls the purple morning far and  
wide

In flakes of light upon the mountain-side;  
Where with loud voice the power of water  
shakes

The leafy wood, or sleeps in quiet lakes.

Yet not unrecompensed the man shall  
roam,

Who at the call of summer quits his  
home,

And plods through some wide realm o'er  
vale and height,

Though seeking only holiday delight;  
At least, not owing to himself an aim  
To which the sage would give a prouder  
name.

<sup>1</sup> The original (1793) text of this Poem will be found in the Appendix, pp. 601-617. It differs in many important particulars from the finally revised text here given.—Ed.

No gains too cheaply earned his fancy  
 cloy, 15  
 Though every passing zephyr whispers joy;  
 Brisk toil, alternating with ready ease,  
 Feeds the clear current of his sympathies.  
 For him sod-seats the cottage-door adorn;  
 And peeps the far-off spire, his evening  
 bourn! 20  
 Dear is the forest frowning o'er his head,  
 And dear the velvet green-sward to his  
 tread:  
 Moves there a cloud o'er mid-day's flam-  
 ing eye?  
 Upward he looks—"and calls it luxury:"  
 Kind Nature's charities his steps at-  
 tend; 25  
 In every babbling brook he finds a friend;  
 While chastening thoughts of sweetest  
 use, bestowed  
 By wisdom, moralise his pensive road.  
 Host of his welcome inn, the noon-tide  
 bower,  
 To his spare meal he calls the passing  
 poor; 30  
 He views the sun uplift his golden fire,  
 Or sink, with heart alive like Memnon's  
 lyre;<sup>1</sup>  
 Blesses the moon that comes with kindly  
 ray,  
 To light him shaken by his rugged way.  
 Back from his sight no bashful children  
 steal; 35  
 He sits a brother at the cottage-meal;  
 His humble looks no shy restraint impart;  
 Around him plays at will the virgin heart.  
 While unsuspended wheels the village  
 dance,  
 The maidens eye him with enquiring  
 glance, 40  
 Much wondering by what fit of crazing  
 \*care,  
 Or desperate love, bewildered, he came  
 there.  
 A hope, that prudence could not then  
 approve,  
 That clung to Nature with a truant's love,

O'er Gallia's wastes of corn my footsteps  
 led; 45  
 Her files of road-elms, high above my head  
 In long-drawn vista, rustling in the  
 breeze;  
 Or where her pathways straggle as they  
 please  
 By lonely farms and secret villages.  
 But lo! the Alps, ascending white in  
 air, 50  
 Toy with the sun and glitter from afar.  
 And now, emerging from the forest's  
 gloom,  
 I greet thee, Chartreuse, while I mourn  
 thy doom.  
 Whither is fled that Power whose frown  
 severe  
 Awed sober Reason till she crouched in  
 fear? 55  
 That Silence, once in deathlike fetters  
 bound,  
 Chains that were loosened only by the  
 sound  
 Of holy rites chanted in measured round?  
 —The voice of blasphemy the fane alarms,  
 The cloister startles at the gleam of  
 arms. 60  
 The thundering tube the aged angler  
 hears,  
 Bent o'er the groaning flood that sweeps  
 away his tears.  
 Cloud-piercing pine-trees nod their trou-  
 bled heads,  
 Spires, rocks, and lawns a browner night  
 o'erspreads;  
 Strong terror checks the female peasant's  
 sighs, 65  
 And start the astonished shades at female  
 eyes.  
 From Bruno's forest screams the affright-  
 ed jay,  
 And slow the insulted eagle wheels away.  
 A viewless flight of laughing Demon's  
 mock  
 The Cross, by angels planted<sup>2</sup> on the  
 aerial rock. 70

<sup>1</sup> The lyre of Memnon is reported to have emitted melancholy or cheerful tones, as it was touched by the sun's evening or morning rays.

<sup>2</sup> Alluding to crosses seen on the tops of the spiry rocks of Chartreuse, which have every appearance of being inaccessible.

The "parting Genius" sighs with hollow  
breath

Along the mystic streams of Life and  
Death.<sup>1</sup>

Swelling the outcry dull, that long re-  
sounds

Portentous through her old woods' track-  
less bounds,

Vallombre,<sup>2</sup> 'mid her falling fanes, de-  
plores, 75

For ever broke, the sabbath of her bowers.

More pleased, my foot the hidden mar-  
gin roves

Of Como, bosomed deep in chestnut  
groves.

No meadows thrown between, the giddy  
steeps

Tower, bare or sylvan, from the narrow  
deeps. 80

—To towns, whose shades of no rude  
noise complain,

From ringing team apart and grating  
wain—

To flat-roofed towns, that touch the wa-  
ter's bound,

Or lurk in woody sunless glens profound,  
Or, from the bending rocks, obtrusive

cling, 85

And o'er the whitened wave their sha-  
dows fling—

The pathway leads, as round the steeps  
it twines;

And Silence loves its purple roof of vines.  
The loitering traveller hence, at evening,

sees

From rock-hewn steps the sail between  
the trees; 90

Or marks, 'mid opening cliffs, fair dark-  
eyed maids

Tend the small harvest of their garden  
glades;

Or stops the solemn mountain-shades to  
view

Stretch o'er the pictured mirror broad  
and blue,

And track the yellow lights from steep  
to steep, 95

As up the opposing hills they slowly  
creep.

Aloft, here, half a village shines, arrayed  
In golden light; half hides itself in  
shade:

While, from amid the darkened roofs, the  
spire,

Restlessly flashing, seems to mount like  
fire: 100

There, all unshaded, blazing forests throw  
Rich golden verdure on the lake below.

Slow glides the sail along the illumined  
shore,

And steals into the shade the lazy oar;  
Soft bosoms breathe around contagious

sighs, 105

And amorous music on the water dies.

How blest, delicious scene! the eye that  
greeted

Thy open beauties, or thy lone retreats;  
Beholds the unwearied sweep of wood

that scales

Thy cliffs; the endless waters of thy  
vales; 110

Thy lowly cots that sprinkle all the shore,  
Each with its household boat beside the

door;

Thy torrents shooting from the clear-blue  
sky;

Thy towns that cleave, like swallows'  
nests, on high;

That glimmer hoar in eve's last light,  
descried 115

Dim from the twilight water's shaggy side,  
Whence lutes and voices down the en-  
chanted woods

Steal, and compose the oar-forgotten  
floods;

—Thy lake that, streaked or dappled,  
blue or grey, 120

'Mid smoking woods gleams hid from  
morning's ray

Slow-travelling down the western hills,  
to enfold

Its green-tinged margin in a blaze of  
gold;

Thy glittering steeples, whence the matin  
bell

Calls forth the woodman from his desert  
cell,

<sup>1</sup> Names of rivers at the Chartreuse.

<sup>2</sup> Name of one of the valleys of the Chartreuse.

And quickens the blithe sound of oars  
that pass 125

Along the steaming lake, to early mass.  
But now farewell to each and all—adieu  
To every charm, and last and chief to  
you,

Ye lovely maidens that in noontide shade  
Rest near your little plots of wheaten  
glade; 130

To all that binds the soul in powerless  
trance,

Lip-dewing song, and ringlet-tossing  
dance;

Where sparkling eyes and breaking smiles  
illumine

The sylvan cabin's lute-enlivened gloom.

—Alas! the very murmur of the streams  
Breathes o'er the failing soul voluptuous  
dreams, 136

While Slavery, forcing the sunk mind to  
dwell

On joys that might disgrace the captive's  
cell,

Her shameless timbrel shakes on Como's  
marge,

And lures from bay to bay the vocal  
barge. 140

Yet are thy softer arts with power in-  
duced

To soothe and cheer the poor man's soli-  
tude.

By silent cottage-doors, the peasant's  
home

Left vacant for the day, I loved to roam.

But once I pierced the mazes of a wood

In which a cabin undeserted stood; 146

There an old man an olden measure  
scanned

On a rude viol touched with withered  
hand.

As lambs or fawns in April clustering lie  
Under a hoary oak's thin canopy, 150

Stretched at his feet, with steadfast up-  
ward eye,

His children's children listened to the  
sound;

—A Hermit with his family around!

But let us hence; for fair Locarno  
smiles

Embowered in walnut slopes and citron  
isles: 155

Or seek at eve the banks of Tusa's stream,  
Where 'mid dim towers and woods, her<sup>1</sup>  
waters gleam.

From the bright wave, in solemn gloom,  
retire

The dull-red steep, and, darkening still,  
aspire

To where afar rich orange lustres glow

Round undistinguished clouds, and rocks,  
and snow: 161

Or, led where Via Mala's chasms confine

The indignant waters of the infant Rhine,  
Hang o'er the abyss, whose else imper-  
vious gloom

His burning eyes with fearful light il-  
lume. 165

The mind condemned, without reprieve,  
to go

O'er life's long deserts with its charge of  
woe,

With sad congratulation joins the train  
Where beasts and men together o'er the  
plain

Move on—a mighty caravan of pain: 170  
Hope, strength, and courage, social suf-  
fering brings,

Freshening the wilderness with shades  
and springs.

—There be whose lot far otherwise is  
cast:

Sole human tenant of the piny waste,  
By choice or doom a gipsy wanders here,

A nursing babe her only comforter; 176  
Lo, where she sits beneath yon shaggy  
rock,

A cowering shape half hid in curling  
smoke!

When lightning among clouds and  
mountain-snows

Predominates, and darkness comes and  
goes, 180

And the fierce torrent at the flashes broad  
Starts, like a horse, beside the glaring  
road—

<sup>1</sup> The river along whose banks you descend in  
crossing the Alps by the Simplon Pass.

She seeks a covert from the battering  
shower  
In the roofed bridge;<sup>1</sup> the bridge, in that  
dread hour,  
Itself all trembling at the torrent's power.

Nor is she more at ease on some *still*  
night, 186  
When not a star supplies the comfort of  
its light;  
Only the waning moon hangs dull and red  
Above a melancholy mountain's head,  
Then sets. In total gloom the Vagrant  
sighs, 190  
Stoops her sick head, and shuts her weary  
eyes;  
Or on her fingers counts the distant clock,  
Or to the drowsy crow of midnight cock  
Listens, or quakes while from the forest's  
gulf  
Howls near and nearer yet the famished  
wolf. 195

From the green vale of Urseren smooth  
and wide  
Descend we now, the maddened Reuss  
our guide;  
By rocks that, shutting out the blessed  
day,  
Cling tremblingly to rocks as loose as  
they;  
By cells<sup>2</sup> upon whose image, while he  
prays, 200  
The kneeling peasant scarcely dares to  
gaze;  
By many a votive death-cross<sup>3</sup> planted  
near,  
And watered duly with the pious tear,  
That faded silent from the upward eye  
Unmoved with each rude form of peril  
nigh; 205

<sup>1</sup> Most of the bridges among the Alps are of wood, and covered: these bridges have a heavy appearance, and rather injure the effect of the scenery in some places.

<sup>2</sup> The Catholic religion prevails here: these cells are, as is well known, very common in the Catholic countries, planted, like the Roman tombs, along the road side.

<sup>3</sup> Crosses, commemorative of the deaths of travellers, by the fall of snow and other accidents, are very common along this dreadful road.

Fixed on the anchor left by Him who saves  
Alike in whelming snows and roaring  
waves.

But soon a peopled region on the sight  
Opens—a little world of calm delight;  
Where mists, suspended on the expiring  
gale, 210  
Spread rooflike o'er the deep secluded vale,  
And beams of evening, slipping in be-  
tween,  
Gently illuminate a sober scene:—  
Here, on the brown wood-cottages<sup>4</sup> they  
sleep, 214  
There, over rock or sloping pasture creep,  
On as we journey, in clear view displayed,  
The still vale lengthens underneath its  
shade  
Of low-hung vapour: on the freshened  
mead  
The green light sparkles;—the dim bowers  
recede.  
While pastoral pipes and streams the  
landscape lull, 220  
And bells of passing mules that tinkle  
dull,  
In solemn shapes before the admiring eye  
Dilated hang the misty pines on high,  
Huge convent domes with pinnacles and  
towers,  
And antique castles seen through gleamy  
showers. 225

From such romantic dreams, my soul,  
awake  
To sterner pleasure, where, by Uri's lake,  
In Nature's pristine majesty outspread,  
Winds neither road nor path for foot to  
tread:  
The rocks rise naked as a wall, or stretch  
Far o'er the water, hung with groves of  
beech; 231  
Aerial pines from loftier steeps ascend,  
Nor stop but where creation seems to end.  
Yet here and there, if 'mid the savage  
scene 234  
Appears a scanty plot of smiling green,  
Up from the lake a zigzag path will creep

<sup>4</sup> The houses in the more retired Swiss valleys are all built of wood.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| To reach a small wood-hut hung boldly<br>on the steep.   | Or thrill of Spartan life is caught between<br>the blast.  |
| —Before those thresholds (never can they<br>know   | Sworn with incessant rains from hour<br>to hour, 270   |
| The face of traveller passing to and fro,<br>No peasant leans upon his pole, to tell 240   | All day the floods a deepening murmur<br>pour:   |
| For whom at morning tolled the funeral<br>bell;  | The sky is veiled, and every cheerful<br>sight:  |
| Their watch-dog ne'er his angry bark for-<br>goes,   | Dark is the region as with coming night;<br>But what a sudden burst of overpowering<br>light!  |
| Touched by the beggar's moan of human<br>woes;   | Triumphant on the bosom of the storm,<br>Glances the wheeling eagle's glorious<br>form! 276  |
| The shady porch ne'er offered a cool seat<br>To pilgrims overcome by summer's heat.  | Eastward, in long perspective glittering,<br>shine   |
| Yet thither the world's business finds its<br>way 246  | The wood-crowned cliffs that o'er the lake<br>recline;   |
| At times, and tales unsought beguile the<br>day,   | Those lofty cliffs a hundred streams un-<br>fold,  |
| And <i>there</i> are those fond thoughts which<br>Solitude,  | At once to pillars turned that flame with<br>gold: 280   |
| However stern, is powerless to exclude.  | Behind his sail the peasant shrinks, to<br>shun  |
| There doth the maiden watch her lover's<br>sail 250  | The <i>west</i> , that burns like one dilated sun,<br>A crucible of mighty compass, felt   |
| Approaching, and upbraid the tardy gale;<br>At midnight listens till his parting oar,<br>And its last echo, can be heard no more.        | By mountains, glowing till they seem to<br>melt. 284   |
| And what if ospreys, cormorants, herons<br>cry, 254  | But, lo! the boatman, overawed, before<br>The pictured fane of Tell suspends his oar;<br>Confused the Marathonian tale appears,<br>While his eyes sparkle with heroic tears.<br>And who, that walks where men of an-<br>cient days |
| Amid tempestuous vapours driving by,<br>Or hovering over wastes too bleak to rear<br>That common growth of earth, the food-<br>ful ear;  | Have wrought with godlike arm the deeds<br>of praise, 290  |
| Where the green apple shrivels on the<br>spray,  | Feels not the spirit of the place control,<br>Or rouse and agitate his labouring soul?   |
| And pines the unripened pear in sum-<br>mer's kindest ray;   | Say, who, by thinking on Canadian hills,<br>Or wild Aosta lulled by Alpine rills,  |
| Contentment shares the desolate domain.<br>With Independence, child of high Dis-<br>dain. 261  | On Zutphen's plain, or on that highland<br>dell, 295   |
| Existing 'mid the winter of the skies,<br>Shy as the jealous chamois, Freedom flies,<br>And grasps by fits her sword, and often<br>eyes; | Through which rough Garry cleaves his<br>way, can tell   |
| And sometimes, as from rock to rock she<br>bounds, 265   | What high resolves exalt the tenderest<br>thought  |
| The Patriot nymph starts at imagined<br>sounds,  | Of him whom passion rivets to the spot,<br>Where breathed the gale that caught<br>Wolfe's happiest sigh,   |
| And, wildly pausing, oft she hangs aghast,<br>Whether some old Swiss air hath checked<br>her haste,                                      |  |

And the last sunbeam fell on Bayard's  
eye ; 300  
Where bleeding Sidney from the cup retired,  
And glad Dundee in "faint huzzas" expired?

But now with other mind I stand alone  
Upon the summit of this naked cone,  
And watch the fearless chamois-hunter  
chase 305

His prey, through tracts abrupt of desolate space,

<sup>1</sup>Through vacant worlds where Nature  
never gave

A brook to murmur or a bough to wave,  
Which unsubstantial Phantoms sacred  
keep ;

Thro' worlds where Life, and Voice, and  
Motion sleep ; 310

Where silent Hours their death-like sway  
extend,

Save when the avalanche breaks loose, to  
rend

Its way with uproar, till the ruin, drowned  
In some dense wood or gulf of snow profound,

Mocks the dull ear of Time with deaf  
abortive sound. 315

—'Tis his, while wandering on from  
height to height,

To see a planet's pomp and steady light  
In the least star of scarce-appearing night ;

While the pale moon moves near him, on  
the bound 319

Of ether, shining with diminished round,  
And far and wide the icy summits blaze,

Rejoicing in the glory of her rays :  
To him the day-star glitters small and  
bright, 323

Shorn of its beams, insufferably white,  
And he can look beyond the sun, and view

Those fast-receding depths of sable blue  
Flying till vision can no more pursue !

—At once bewildering mists around him  
close, 328

And cold and hunger are his least of woes ;

<sup>1</sup> For most of the images in the next sixteen  
verses, I am indebted to M. Raymond's interesting  
observations, annexed to his translation of Coxe's  
Tour in Switzerland.

The Demon of the snow, with angry roar  
Descending, shuts for aye his prison door.  
Soon with despair's whole weight his spir-  
its sink ; 332  
Bread has he none, the snow must be his  
drink ;

And, ere his eyes can close upon the day,  
The eagle of the Alps o'ershades her prey.

Now couch thyself where, heard with  
fear afar, 336

Thunders through echoing pines the head-  
long Aar ;

Or rather stay to taste the mild delights  
Of pensive Underwalden's <sup>2</sup> pastoral  
heights.

—Is there who 'mid these awful wilds  
has seen 340

The native Genii walk the mountain  
green ?

Or heard, while other worlds their charms  
reveal,

Soft music o'er the aerial summit steal ?  
While o'er the desert, answering every  
close,

Rich steam of sweetest perfume comes  
and goes. 345

—And sure there is a secret Power that  
reigns

Here, where no trace of man the spot  
profanes,

Nought but the *chalets*,<sup>3</sup> flat and bare, on  
high

Suspended 'mid the quiet of the sky ;  
Or distant herds that pasturing upward  
creep, 350

And, not untended, climb the dangerous  
steep.

How still ! no irreligious sound or sight  
Rouses the soul from her severe delight.

An idle voice the sabbath region fills ?  
Of Deep that calls to Deep across the hills,

And with that voice accords the soothing  
sound 356

<sup>2</sup> The people of this Canton are supposed to be  
of a more melancholy disposition than the other  
inhabitants of the Alps ; this, if true, may pro-  
ceed from their living more secluded.

<sup>3</sup> This picture is from the middle region of the  
Alps. *Chalets* are summer huts for the Swiss  
herdsmen.

Of drowsy bells, for ever tinkling round ;  
Faint wail of eagle melting into blue  
Beneath the cliffs, and pine-wood's steady  
sigh ;<sup>1</sup>

The solitary heifer's deepened low ; 360  
Or rumbling, heard remote, of falling  
snow.

All motions, sounds, and voices, far and  
nigh,

Blend in a music of tranquillity ;  
Saw when, a stranger seen below, the  
boy

Shouts from the echoing hills with savage  
joy. 365

When, from the sunny breast of open  
seas,

And bays with myrtle fringed, the  
southern breeze

Comes on to gladden April with the  
sight

Of green isles widening on each snow-  
clad height ;

When shouts and lowing herds the valley  
fill. 370

And louder torrents stun the noon-tide  
hill,

The pastoral Swiss begin the cliffs to  
scale,

Leaving to silence the deserted vale ;  
And, like the Patriarchs in their simple  
age,

Move, as the verdure leads, from stage  
to stage ; 375

High and more high in summer's heat  
they go,

And hear the rattling thunder far below ;  
Or steal beneath the mountains, half-  
deterred,

Where huge rocks tremble to the bellow-  
ing herd.

One I behold who, 'cross the foaming  
flood, 380

Leaps with a bound of graceful hardi-  
hood ;

Another high on that green ledge ;—he  
gained

.

<sup>1</sup> Sugh, a Scotch word expressive of the sound  
of the wind through the trees.

The tempting spot with every sinew  
strained ;

And downward thence a knot of grass  
he throws,

Food for his beasts in time of winter  
snows. 385

—Far different life from what Tradition  
hoar

Transmits of happier lot in times of yore !  
Then Summer lingered long ; and honey  
flowed

From out the rocks, the wild bees' safe  
abode :

Continual waters welling cheered the  
waste, 390

And plants were wholesome, now of  
deadly taste :

Nor Winter yet his frozen stores had  
piled,

Usurping where the fairest herbage  
smiled :

Nor Hunger driven the herds from pas-  
tures bare,

To climb the treacherous cliffs for scanty  
fare. 395

Then the milk-thistle flourished through  
the land,

And forced the full-swoln udder to de-  
mand,

Thrice every day, the pail and welcome  
hand.

Thus does the father to his children tell  
Of banished bliss, by fancy loved too  
well. 400

Alas ! that human guilt provoked the rod  
Of angry Nature to avenge her God.

Still, Nature, ever just, to him imparts  
Joys only given to uncorrupted hearts.

'Tis morn : with gold the verdant moun-  
tain glows ; 405

More high, the snowy peaks with hues  
of rose.

Far stretched beneath the many-tinted  
hills,

A mighty waste of mist the valley fills,  
A solemn sea ! whose billows wide around

Stand motionless, to awful silence  
bound : 410

Pines, on the coast, through mist their  
tops uprear,

That like to leaning masts of stranded  
ships appear.

A single chasm, a gulf of gloomy blue,  
Gapes in the centre of the sea—and,  
through

That dark mysterious gulf ascending,  
sound 415

Innumerable streams with roar profound.  
Mount through the nearer vapours notes  
of birds,

And merry flageolet; the low of herds,  
The bark of dogs, the heifer's tinkling bell,  
Talk, laughter, and perchance a church-  
tower knell: 420

Think not the peasant from aloft has  
gazed

And heard with heart unmoved, with soul  
unraised:

Nor is his spirit less enrapt, nor less  
Alive to independent happiness,  
Then, when he lies, out-stretched, at  
even-tide 425

Upon the fragrant mountain's purple  
side:

For as the pleasures of his simple day  
Beyond his native valley seldom stray,  
Nought round its darling precincts can  
he find

But brings some past enjoyment to his  
mind; 430

While Hope, reclining upon Pleasure's  
urn,

Binds her wild wreaths, and whispers his  
return.

Once, Man entirely free, alone and wild,  
Was blest as free—for he was Nature's  
child.

He, all superior but his God disdain-  
ed, 435

Walked none restraining, and by none  
restrained:

Confessed no law but what his reason  
taught,

Did all he wished, and wished but what  
he ought.

As man in his primeval dower arrayed  
The image of his glorious Sire dis-  
played, 440

Even so, by faithful Nature guarded,  
here

The traces of primeval Man appear;  
The simple dignity no forms debase;  
The eye sublime, and surly lion-grace:  
The slave of none, of beasts alone the  
lord, 445

His book he prizes, nor neglects his  
sword;

—Well taught by that to feel his rights,  
prepared

With this "the blessings he enjoys to  
guard."

And as his native hills encircle ground  
For many a marvellous victory renown-  
ed, 450

The work of Freedom daring to oppose,  
With few in arms,<sup>1</sup> innumerable foes,  
When to those famous fields his steps are  
led,

An unknown power connects him with  
the dead:

For images of other worlds are there; 455  
Awful the light, and holy is the air.

Fitfully, and in flashes, through his soul,  
Like sun-lit tempests, troubled trans-  
ports roll;

His bosom heaves, his Spirit towers a-  
main,

Beyond the senses and their little  
reign. 460

And oft, when that dread vision hath  
past by,

He holds with God himself communion  
high,

There where the peal of swelling torrents  
fills

The sky-roofed temple of the eternal hills;  
Or, when upon the mountain's silent  
brow 465

<sup>1</sup> Alluding to several battles which the Swiss in very small numbers have gained over their oppressors, the House of Austria; and, in particular, to one fought at Næfels near Glarus, where three hundred and thirty men are said to have defeated an army of between fifteen and twenty thousand Austrians. Scattered over the valley are to be found eleven stones, with this inscription, 1338, the year the battle was fought, marking out, as I was told upon the spot, the several places where the Austrians, attempting to make a stand, were repulsed anew.

Reclined, he sees, above him and below,  
Bright stars of ice and azure fields of  
snow;

While needle peaks of granite shooting  
bare

Tremble in ever-varying tints of air.

And when a gathering weight of shadows  
brown 470

Falls on the valleys as the sun goes  
down;

And Pikes, of darkness named and fear  
and storms,<sup>1</sup>

Uplift in quiet their illumined forms,  
In sea-like reach of prospect round him  
spread,

Tinged like an angel's smile all rosy  
red— 475

Awe in his breast with holiest love unites,  
And the near heavens impart their own  
delights.

When downward to his winter hut he  
goes,

Dear and more dear the lessening circle  
grows;

That hut which on the hills so oft em-  
ploys 480

His thoughts, the central point of all his  
joys.

And as a swallow, at the hour of rest,  
Peeps often ere she darts into her nest,

So to the homestead, where the grandsire  
tends

A little prattling child, he oft descends,  
To glance a look upon the well-matched  
pair; 486

Till storm and driving ice blockade him  
there.

There, safely guarded by the woods be-  
hind,

He hears the chiding of the baffled wind,  
Hears Winter calling all his terrors  
round, 490

And, blest within himself, he shrinks not  
from the sound.

Through Nature's vale his homely plea-  
sures glide,

Through Nature's vale his homely plea-  
sures glide,

Unstained by envy, discontent, and  
pride;

The bound of all his vanity, to deck,  
With one bright bell a favourite heifer's  
neck; 495

Well pleased upon some simple annual  
feast,

Remembered half the year and hoped the  
rest,

If dairy-produce, from his inner hoard,  
Of thrice ten summers dignify the board.

—Alas! in every clime a flying ray 500  
Is all we have to cheer our wintry way;

And here the unwilling mind may more  
than trace

The general sorrows of the human race:  
The churlish gales of penury, that blow

Cold as the north-wind o'er a waste of  
snow, 505

To them the gentle groups of bliss deny  
That on the noon-day bank of leisure lie.

Yet more;—compelled by Powers which  
only deign

That *solitary* man disturb their reign,  
Powers that support an unremitting strife

With all the tender charities of life, 511  
Full oft the father, when his sons have

grown

To manhood, seems their title to disown;  
And from his nest amid the storms of  
heaven

Drives, eagle-like, those sons as he was  
driven; 515

With stern composure watches to the  
plain—

And never, eagle-like, beholds again!

When long familiar joys are all re-  
signed,

Why does their sad remembrance haunt  
the mind?

Lo! where through flat Batavia's willowy  
groves, 520

Or by the lazy Seine, the exile roves;  
O'er the curled waters Alpine measures  
swell,

And search the affections to their inmost  
cell;

Sweet poison spreads along the listener's  
veins,

Turning past pleasures into mortal pains;

<sup>1</sup> As Schreck-Horn, the pike of terror; Wetter-  
Horn, the pike of storms, &c., &c.

Poison, which not a frame of steel can  
brave, 526  
Bows his young head with sorrow to the  
grave.<sup>1</sup>

Gay lark of hope, thy silent song re-  
sume!  
Ye flattering eastern lights, once more  
the hills illumine!  
Fresh gales and dews of life's delicious  
morn, 530  
And thou, lost fragrance of the heart,  
return!  
Alas! the little joy to man allowed  
Fades like the lustre of an evening cloud;  
Or like the beauty in a flower installed,  
Whose season was, and cannot be re-  
called. 535  
Yet, when oppress by sickness, grief, or  
care,  
And taught that pain is pleasure's natural  
heir,  
We still confide in more than we can  
know;  
Death would be else the favourite friend  
of woe.

'Mid savage rocks, and seas of snow  
that shine, 540  
Between interminable tracts of pine,  
Within a temple stands an awful shrine,  
By an uncertain light revealed, that falls  
On the mute Image and the troubled  
walls.  
Oh! give not me that eye of hard dis-  
dain 545  
That views, undimmed, Einsiedlen's<sup>2</sup>  
wretched fane.  
While ghastly faces through the gloom  
appear,  
Abortive joy, and hope that works in  
fear;  
While prayer contends with silenced  
agony,

<sup>1</sup> The well-known effect of the famous air, called in French *Ranz des Vaches*, upon the Swiss troops.

<sup>2</sup> This shrine is resorted to, from a hope of relief, by multitudes, from every corner of the Catholic world, labouring under mental or bodily afflictions.

Surely in other thoughts contempt may  
die. 550  
If the sad grave of human ignorance bear  
One flower of hope—oh, pass and leave it  
there!

The tall sun, pausing on an Alpine  
spire,  
Flings o'er the wilderness a stream of fire:  
Now meet we other pilgrims ere the  
day 555  
Close on the remnant of their weary way;  
While they are drawing toward the sacred  
floor  
Where, so they fondly think, the worm  
shall gnaw no more.  
How gaily murmur and how sweetly  
taste  
The fountains<sup>3</sup> reared for them amid the  
waste! 560  
Their thirst they slake:—they wash their  
toll-worn feet,  
And some with tears of joy each other  
greet.  
Yes, I must see you when ye first behold  
Those holy turrets tipped with evening  
gold,  
In that glad moment will for you a  
sigh 565  
Be heaved of charitable sympathy;  
In that glad moment when your hands  
are prest  
In mute devotion on the thankful breast!

Last, let us turn to Chamouny that  
shields  
With rocks and gloomy woods her fertile  
fields: 570  
Five streams of ice amid her cots de-  
scend,  
And with wild flowers and blooming  
orchards blend;—  
A scene more fair than what the Grecian  
feigns  
Of purple lights and ever-vernal plains;  
Here all the seasons revel hand in  
hand: 575

<sup>3</sup> Rude fountains built and covered with sheds for the accommodation of the Pilgrims, in their ascent of the mountain.

Mid lawns and shades by breezy rivulets  
fanned,  
They sport beneath that mountain's  
matchless height  
That holds no commerce with the sum-  
mer night.  
From age to age, throughout his lonely  
boards  
The crash of ruin fitfully resounds; 580  
Appalling havoc! but serene his brow,  
Where daylight lingers on perpetual  
snow;  
Glitter the stars above, and all is black  
below.

What marvel then if many a Wanderer  
sigh, 584  
While roars the sullen Arve in anger by,  
That not for thy reward, unrivall'd Vale!  
Waves the ripe harvest in the autumnal  
gale;  
That thou, the slave of slaves, art doomed  
to pine  
And droop, while no Italian arts are  
thine,  
To soothe or cheer, to soften or refine. 590

Hail Freedom! whether it was mine to  
stray,  
With shrill winds whistling round my  
lonely way,  
On the bleak sides of Cumbria's heath-  
clad moors,  
Or where dank sea-weed lashes Scotland's  
shores;  
To scent the sweets of Piedmont's breath-  
ing rose, 595  
And orange gale that o'er Lugano blows;  
Still have I found, where Tyranny pre-  
vails,  
That virtue languishes and pleasure fails,  
While the remotest hamlets blessings share  
In thy loved presence known, and only  
there; 600  
Heart-blessings—outward treasures too  
which the eye  
Of the sun peeping through the clouds  
can spy,  
And every passing breeze will testify.  
There, to the porch, belike with jasmine  
bound

Or woodbine wreaths, a smother path is  
wound; 605  
The housewife there a brighter garden  
sees,  
Where hum on busier wing her happy  
bees;  
On infant cheeks there fresher roses blow;  
And grey-haired men look up with livelier  
brow,—  
To greet the traveller needing food and  
rest; 610  
Housed for the night, or but a half-hour's  
guest.

And oh, fair France! though now the  
traveller sees  
Thy three-striped banner fluctuate on the  
breeze;  
Though martial songs have banished songs  
of love,  
And nightingales desert the village grove,  
Scared by the fife and rumbling drum's  
alarms, 616  
And the short thunder, and the flash of  
arms;  
That cease not till night falls, when far  
and nigh,  
Sole sound, the Sourd<sup>1</sup> prolongs his  
mournful cry;  
—Yet hast thou found that Freedom  
spreads her power 620  
Beyond the cottage hearth, the cottage-  
door:  
All nature smiles, and owns beneath her  
eyes  
Her fields peculiar, and peculiar skies.  
Yes, as I roamed where Loiret's waters  
glide  
Through rustling aspens heard from side  
to side, 625  
When from October clouds a milder light  
Fell where the blue flood rippled into  
white;  
Methought from every cot the watchful  
bird  
Crowed with ear-piercing power till then  
unheard;

<sup>1</sup> An insect so called, which emits a short, melancholy cry, heard at the close of the summer evenings, on the banks of the Loire.

Each clacking mill, that broke the mur-  
muring streams, 630  
Rocked the charmed thought in more  
delightful dreams;  
Chasing those pleasant dreams, the fall-  
ing leaf  
Awoke a fainter sense of moral grief;  
The measured echo of the distant flail  
Wound in more welcome cadence down  
the vale; 635  
With more majestic course<sup>1</sup> the water  
rolled,  
And ripening foliage shone with richer  
gold.  
—But foes are gathering—Liberty must  
raise  
Red on the hills her beacon's far-seen  
blaze;  
Must bid the tocsin ring from tower to  
tower!— 640  
Nearer and nearer comes the trying hour!  
Rejoice, brave Land, though pride's per-  
verted ire  
Rouse hell's own aid, and wrap thy fields  
in fire:  
Lo, from the flames a great and glorious  
birth;  
As if a new-made heaven were hailing a  
new earth! 645  
—All cannot be: the promise is too fair  
For creatures doomed to breathe terres-  
trial air:  
Yet not for this will sober reason frown  
Upon that promise, nor the hope dis-  
own;  
She knows that only from high aims  
ensue 650  
Rich guerdons, and to them alone are  
due.

Great God! by whom the strifes of men  
are weighed  
In an impartial balance, give thine aid  
To the just cause; and, oh! do thou pre-  
side  
Over the mighty stream now spreading  
wide: 655

<sup>1</sup> The duties upon many parts of the French  
rivers were so exorbitant, that the poorer people,  
deprived of the benefit of water carriage, were  
obliged to transport their goods by land.

So shall its waters, from the heavens  
supplied  
In copious showers, from earth by whole-  
some springs,  
Brood o'er the long-parched lands with  
Nile-like wings!  
And grant that every sceptred child of  
clay  
Who cries presumptuous, "Here the flood  
shall stay," 660  
May in its progress see thy guiding hand,  
And cease the acknowledged purpose to  
withstand;  
Or, swept in anger from the insulted  
shore,  
Sink with his servile bands, to rise no  
more!

To-night, my Friend, within this hum-  
ble cot 665  
Be scorn and fear and hope alike forgot  
In timely sleep; and when, at break of  
day,  
On the tall peaks the glistening sunbeams  
play,  
With a light heart our course we may  
renew,  
The first whose footsteps print the moun-  
tain dew. 670

## VII.

## LINES

Left upon a Seat in a Yew-tree, which stands  
near the lake of Esthwaite, on a desolate part  
of the shore, commanding a beautiful prospect.  
[Begun 1787.—Completed 1795.—Published 1798.]  
NAY, Traveller! rest. This lonely Yew-  
tree stands  
Far from all human dwelling: what if  
here 6  
No sparkling rivulet spread the verdant  
herb?  
What if the bee love not these barren  
boughs?  
Yet, if the wind breathe soft, the curling  
waves, 5  
That break against the shore, shall lull  
thy mind  
By one soft impulse saved from vacancy.  
—Who he was

That piled these stones and with the  
mossy sod  
First covered, and here taught this aged  
Tree 10  
With its dark arms to form a circling  
bower,  
I well remember.—He was one who owned  
No common soul. In youth by science  
nursed,  
And led by nature into a wild scene  
Of lofty hopes, he to the world went  
forth 15  
A favoured Being, knowing no desire  
Which genius did not hallow; 'gainst the  
taint  
Of dissolute tongues, and jealousy, and  
hate,  
And scorn,—against all enemies prepared,  
All but neglect. The world, for so it  
thought, 20  
Owed him no service; wherefore he at once  
With indignation turned himself away,  
And with the food of pride sustained his  
soul  
In solitude.—Stranger! these gloomy  
boughs  
Had charms for him; and here he loved  
to sit, 25  
His only visitants a straggling sheep,  
The stone-chat, or the glancing sand-  
piper:  
And on these barren rocks, with fern and  
heath,  
And juniper and thistle, sprinkled o'er,  
Fixing his downcast eye, he many an  
hour 30  
A morbid pleasure nourished, tracing here  
An emblem of his own unfruitful life:  
And, lifting up his head, he then would  
gaze  
On the more distant scene,—how lovely  
'tis  
Thou seest,—and he would gaze till it  
became 35  
Far lovelier, and his heart could not  
sustain  
The beauty, still more beauteous! Nor,  
that time,  
When nature had subdued him to herself,  
Would he forget those Beings to whose  
minds

Warm from the labours of benevolence 40  
The world, and human life, appeared a  
scene  
Of kindred loveliness: then he would sigh,  
Inly disturbed, to think that others felt  
What he must never feel: and so, lost  
Man!  
On visionary views would fancy feed, 45  
Till his eye streamed with tears. In this  
deep vale  
He died,—this seat his only monument.

If Thou be one whose heart the holy  
forms  
Of young imagination have kept pure,  
Stranger! henceforth be warned; and  
know that pride, 50  
Howe'er disguised in its own majesty,  
Is littleness; that he who feels contempt  
For any living thing, hath faculties  
Which he has never used; that thought  
with him  
Is in its infancy. The man whose eye 55  
Is ever on himself doth look on one,  
The least of Nature's works, one who  
might move  
The wise man to that scorn which wisdom  
holds  
Unlawful, ever. O be wiser, Thou!  
Instructed that true knowledge leads to  
love; 60  
True dignity abides with him alone  
Who, in the silent hour of inward thought,  
Can still suspect, and still revere himself,  
In lowliness of heart.

## VIII.

### GUILT AND SORROW;

OR,

INCIDENTS UPON SALISBURY PLAIN.

[Begun 1791-92.—Completed 1798-94.—Pub-  
lished 1842.]

### ADVERTISEMENT,

PREFIXED TO THE FIRST EDITION OF THIS  
POEM, PUBLISHED IN 1842.

Nor less than one-third of the following poem,  
though it has from time to time been altered in  
the expression, was published so far back as the

year 1798, under the title of "The Female Vagrant." The extract is of such length that an apology seems to be required for reprinting it here: but it was necessary to restore it to its original position, or the rest would have been unintelligible. The whole was written before the close of the year 1794, and I will detail, rather as matter of literary biography than for any other reason, the circumstances under which it was produced.

During the latter part of the summer of 1793, having passed a month in the Isle of Wight, in view of the fleet which was then preparing for sea off Portsmouth at the commencement of the war, I left the place with melancholy forebodings. The American war was still fresh in memory. The struggle which was beginning, and which many thought would be brought to a speedy close by the irresistible arms of Great Britain being added to those of the Allies, I was assured in my own mind would be of long continuance, and productive of distress and misery beyond all possible calculation. This conviction was pressed upon me by having been a witness, during a long residence in revolutionary France, of the spirit which prevailed in that country. After leaving the Isle of Wight, I spent two days in wandering on foot over Salisbury Plain, which, though cultivation was then widely spread through parts of it, had upon the whole a still more impressive appearance than it now retains.

The monuments and traces of antiquity, scattered in abundance over that region, led me unavoidably to compare what we know or guess of those remote times with certain aspects of modern society, and with calamities, principally those consequent upon war, to which, more than other classes of men, the poor are subject. In those reflections, joined with particular facts that had come to my knowledge, the following stanzas originated.

In conclusion, to obviate some distraction in the minds of those who are well acquainted with Salisbury Plain, it may be proper to say that, of the features described as belonging to it, one or two are taken from other desolate parts of England.

## I.

A TRAVELLER on the skirt of Sarum's Plain

Pursued his vagrant way, with feet half bare;

Stooping his gait, but not as if to gain

Help from the staff he bore; for mien and air

Were hardy, though his cheek seemed worn with care

Both of the time to come, and time long fled:

Down fell in straggling locks his thin grey hair;

A coat he wore of military red

But faded, and stuck o'er with many a patch and shred.

## II.

While thus he journeyed, step by step led on,

He saw and passed a stately inn, full sure That welcome in such house for him was none.

No board inscribed the needy to allure Hung there, no bush proclaimed to old and poor

And desolate, "Here you will find a friend!"

The pendent grapes glittered above the door;—

On he must pace, perchance till night descend,

Where'er the dreary roads their bare white lines extend.

## III.

The gathering clouds grew red with stormy fire,

In streaks diverging wide and mounting high;

That inn he long had passed; the distant spire,

Which oft as he looked back had fixed his eye,

Was lost, though still he looked, in the blank sky.

Perplexed and comfortless he gazed around,

And scarce could any trace of man descrie, Save cornfields stretched and stretching without bound;

But where the sower dwelt was nowhere to be found.

## IV.

No tree was there, no meadow's pleasant green,

No brook to wet his lip or soothe his ear;

Long files of corn-stacks here and there  
were seen. 30  
But not one dwelling-place his heart to  
cheer.  
Some labourer, thought he, may per-  
chance be near;  
And so he sent a feeble shout—in vain;  
No voice made answer, he could only hear  
Winds rustling over plots of unripe grain,  
Or whistling thro' thin grass along the  
unfurrowed plain. 36

V.

Long had he fancied each successive slope  
Concealed some cottage, whither he might  
turn  
And rest; but now along heaven's dark-  
ening cope  
The crows rushed by in eddies, homeward  
borne. 40  
Thus warned he sought some shepherd's  
spreading thorn  
Or hovel from the storm to shield his head,  
But sought in vain; for now, all wild,  
forlorn,  
And vacant, a huge waste around him  
spread;  
The wet cold ground, he feared, must be  
his only bed. 45

VI.

And be it so—for to the chill night shower  
And the sharp wind his head he oft hath  
bared;  
A Sailor he, who many a wretched hour  
Hath told; for, landing after labour hard,  
Full long endured in hope of just reward,  
He to an armed fleet was forced away 51  
By seamen, who perhaps themselves had  
shared  
Like fate; was hurried off, a helpless prey,  
'Gainst all that in his heart, or theirs  
perhaps, said nay.

VII.

For years the work of carnage did not  
cease, 55  
And death's dire aspect daily he surveyed,  
Death's minister; then came his glad re-  
lease,  
And hope returned, and pleasure fondly  
made

Her dwelling in his dreams. By Fancy's  
aid  
The happy husband flies, his arms to  
throw 60  
Round his wife's neck; the prize of victory  
laid  
In her full lap, he sees such sweet tears  
flow  
As if thenceforth nor pain nor trouble she  
could know.

VIII.

Vain hope! for fraud took all that he had  
earned.  
The lion roars and gluts his tawny brood  
Even in the desert's heart; but he, re-  
turned, 66  
Bears not to those he loves their needful  
food.  
His home approaching, but in such a mood  
That from his sight his children might  
have run,  
He met a traveller, robbed him, shed his  
blood; 70  
And when the miserable work was done  
He fled, a vagrant since, the murderer's  
fate to shun.

IX.

From that day forth no place to him  
could be  
So lonely, but that thence might come a  
pang 74  
Brought from without to inward misery.  
Now, as he plodded on, with sullen clang  
A sound of chains along the desert rang;  
He looked, and saw upon a gibbet high  
A human body that in irons swang,  
Uplifted by the tempest whirling by; 80  
And, hovering, round it often did a raven  
fly.

X.

It was a spectacle which none might view,  
In spot so savage, but with shuddering  
pain;  
Nor only did for him at once renew  
All he had feared from man, but roused 85  
a train  
Of the mind's phantoms, horrible as vain.  
The stones, as if to cover him from day,  
Rolled at his back along the living plain;

He fell, and without sense or motion lay;  
But, when the trance was gone, feebly  
pursued his way. 90

## XI.

As one whose brain habitual frenzy fires  
Owes to the fit in which his soul hath  
tossed  
Profounder quiet, when the fit retires,  
Even so the dire phantasma which had  
crossed  
His sense, in sudden vacancy quite lost,  
Left his mind still as a deep evening  
stream. 95  
Nor, if accosted now, in thought en-  
grossed,  
Moody, or only troubled, would he seem  
To traveller who might talk of any casual  
theme.

## XII.

Hurtle the clouds in deeper darkness  
piled, 100  
Gone is the raven timely rest to seek;  
He seemed the only creature in the wild  
On whom the elements their rage might  
wreak;  
Save that the bustard, of those regions  
bleak  
Shy tenant, seeing by the uncertain light  
A man there wandering, gave a mournful  
shriek, 106  
And half upon the ground, with strange  
affright,  
Forced hard against the wind a thick  
unwieldy flight.

## XIII.

All, all was cheerless to the horizon's  
bound;  
The weary eye—which, wheresoe'er it  
strays, 110  
Marks nothing but the red sun's setting  
round,  
Or on the earth strange lines, in former  
days  
Left by gigantic arms—at length surveys  
What seems an antique castle spreading  
wide;  
Hoary and naked are its walls, and raise  
Their brow sublime: in shelter there to  
bide 116

He turned, while rain poured down  
smoking on every side.

## XIV.

Pile of Stone-henge! so proud to hint yet  
keep  
Thy secrets, thou that lov'st to stand and  
hear  
The Plain resounding to the whirlwind's  
sweep, 120  
Inmate of lonesome Nature's endless year;  
Even if thou saw'st the giant wicker rear  
For sacrifice its throngs of living men,  
Before thy face did ever wretch appear,  
Who in his heart had groaned with dead-  
lier pain 125  
Than he who, tempest-driven, thy shelter  
now would gain?

## XV.

Within that fabric of mysterious form  
Winds met in conflict, each by turns  
supreme;  
And, from the perilous ground dislodged,  
through storm  
And rain he wildered on, no moon to  
stream 130  
From gulf of parting clouds one friendly  
beam,  
Nor any friendly sound his footsteps led;  
Once did the lightning's faint disastrous  
gleam  
Disclose a naked guide-post's double head,  
Sight which, tho' lost at once, a gleam of  
pleasure shed. 135

## XVI.

No swinging sign-board creaked from cot-  
tage elm  
To stay his steps with faintness over-  
come; 140  
'Twas dark and void as ocean's watery  
realm  
Roaring with storms beneath night's star-  
less gloom;  
No gipsy cower'd o'er fire of furze or  
broom; 145  
No labourer watched his red kiln glaring  
bright,  
Nor taper glimmered dim from sick man's  
room;

Along the waste no line of mournful light  
From lamp of lonely toll-gate streamed  
athwart the night.

XVII.

At length, though hid in clouds, the moon  
arose; 145  
The downs were visible—and now re-  
vealed  
A structure stands, which two bare slopes  
enclose.  
It was a spot where, ancient vows fulfilled,  
Kind pious hands did to the Virgin build  
A lonely Spital, the belated swain 150  
From the night terrors of that waste to  
shield:  
But there no human being could remain,  
And now the walls are named the "Dead  
House" of the plain.

XVIII.

Though he had little cause to love the  
abode  
Of man, or covet sight of mortal face, 155  
Yet when faint beams of light that ruin  
showed,  
How glad he was at length to find some  
trace  
Of human shelter in that dreary place.  
Till to his flock the early shepherd goes,  
Here shall much-needed sleep his frame  
embrace. 160  
In a dry nook where fern the floor be-  
strows  
He lays his stiffened limbs,—his eyes be-  
gin to close;

XIX.

When hearing a deep sigh, that seemed  
to come  
From one who mourned in sleep, he raised  
his head,  
And saw a woman in the naked room 165  
Outstretched, and turning on a restless  
bed:  
The moon a wan dead light around her  
shed.  
He waked her—spoke in tone that would  
not fail,  
He hoped, to calm her mind; but ill he  
sped,

For of that ruin she had heard a tale 170  
Which now with freezing thoughts did all  
her powers assail;

XX.

Had heard of one who, forced from storms  
to shroud,  
Felt the loose walls of this decayed  
Retreat  
Rock to incessant neighings shrill and  
loud,  
While his horse pawed the floor with  
furious heat; 175  
Till on a stone, that sparkled to his feet,  
Struck, and still struck again, the trou-  
bled horse:  
The man half raised the stone with pain  
and sweat,  
Half raised, for well his arm might lose  
its force  
Disclosing the grim head of a late mur-  
dered corse. 180

XXI.

Such tale of this lone mansion she had  
learned,  
And when that shape, with eyes in sleep  
half drowned,  
By the moon's sullen lamp she first dis-  
cerned,  
Cold stony horror all her senses bound.  
Her he addressed in words of cheering  
sound; 185  
Recovering heart, like answer did she  
make;  
And well it was that of the corse there  
found  
In converse that ensued she nothing  
spoke;  
She knew not what dire pangs in him  
such tale could wake.

XXII.

But soon his voice and words of kind  
intent 190  
Banished that dismal thought; and now  
the wind  
In fainter howlings told its rage was  
spent:  
Meanwhile discourse ensued of various  
kind,

Which by degrees a confidence of mind  
And mutual interest failed not to create.  
And, to a natural sympathy resigned, 196  
In that forsaken building where they sate  
The Woman thus retraced her own un-  
toward fate.

## XXIII.

"By Derwent's side my father dwelt—a  
man  
Of virtuous life, by pious parents bred;  
And I believe that, soon as I began 201  
To lisp, he made me kneel beside my bed,  
And in his hearing there my prayers I  
said:  
And afterwards, by my good father  
taught,  
I read, and loved the books in which I  
read; 205  
For books in every neighbouring house  
I sought,  
And nothing to my mind a sweeter plea-  
sure brought.

## XXIV.

"A little croft we owned—a plot of corn,  
A garden stored with peas, and mint, and  
thyme,  
And flowers for posies, oft on Sunday  
morn 210  
Plucked while the church bells rang their  
earliest chime.  
Can I forget our freaks at shearing time!  
My hen's rich nest through long grass  
scarce espied;  
The cowslip-gathering in June's dewy  
prime;  
The swans that with white chests up-  
reared in pride 215  
Rushing and racing came to meet me at  
the waterside!

## XXV.

"The staff I well remember which upbore  
The bending body of my active sire;  
His seat beneath the honied sycamore  
Where the bees hummed, and chair by  
winter fire; 220  
When market-morning came, the neat  
attire  
With which, though bent on haste, myself  
I decked;

Our watchful house-dog, that would tease  
and tire  
The stranger till its barking-fit I checked;  
The red-breast, known for years, which  
at my casement pecked. 225

## XXVI.

"The suns of twenty summers danced  
along,—  
Too little marked how fast they rolled  
away:  
But, through severe mischance and cruel  
wrong,  
My father's substance fell into decay:  
We toiled and struggled, hoping for a day  
When Fortune might put on a kinder  
look; 231  
But vain were wishes, efforts vain as they;  
He from his old hereditary nook  
Must part; the summons came;—our final  
leave we took.

## XXVII.

"It was indeed a miserable hour 235  
When, from the last hill-top, my sire sur-  
veyed,  
Peering above the trees, the steeple tower  
That on his marriage day sweet music  
made!  
Till then he hoped his bones might there  
be laid  
Close by my mother in their native  
bowers: 240  
Bidding me trust in God, he stood and  
prayed;—  
I could not pray:—through tears that fell  
in showers  
Glimmered our dear-loved home, alas! no  
longer ours!

## XXVIII.

"There was a Youth whom I had loved  
so long,  
That when I loved him not I cannot say:  
'Mid the green mountains many a thought-  
less song 246  
We two had sung, like gladsome birds in  
May;  
When we began to tire of childish play,  
We seemed still more and more to prize  
each other;

We talked of marriage and our marriage  
day ; 250  
And I in truth did love him like a brother,  
For never could I hope to meet with such  
another.

XXX.

"Two years were passed since to a distant  
town

He had repaired to ply a gainful trade :  
What tears of bitter grief, till then un-  
known, 255  
What tender vows our last sad kiss de-  
layed !

To him we turned :—we had no other aid :  
Like one revived, upon his neck I wept ;  
And her whom he had loved in joy, he  
said,

He well could love in grief ; his faith he  
kept ; 260  
And in a quiet home once more my father  
slept.

XXXI.

"We lived in peace and comfort ; and  
were blest  
With daily bread, by constant toil sup-  
plied.

Three lovely babes had lain upon my  
breast ;  
And often, viewing their sweet smiles, I  
sighed, 265  
And knew not why. My happy father  
died,  
When threatened war reduced the chil-  
dren's meal :

Thrice happy ! that for him the grave  
could hide  
The empty loom, cold hearth, and silent  
wheel,  
And tears which flowed for ills which  
patience might not heal. 270

XXXI.

"'Twas a hard change ; an evil time was  
come ;  
We had no hope, and no relief could gain :  
But soon, with proud parade, the noisy  
drum  
Beat round to clear the streets of want  
and pain.

My husband's arms now only served to  
strain 275  
Me and his children hungering in his view ;  
In such dismay my prayers and tears  
were vain :  
To join those miserable men he flew,  
And now to the sea-coast, with numbers  
more, we drew.

XXXII.

"There were we long neglected, and we  
bore 280  
Much sorrow ere the fleet its anchor  
weighed ;  
Green fields before us, and our native  
shore,  
We breathed a pestilential air, that made  
Ravage for which no knell was heard.  
We prayed  
For our departure ; wished and wished—  
nor knew, 285  
'Mid that long sickness and those hopes  
delayed,  
That happier days we never more must  
view.  
The parting signal streamed—at last the  
land withdrew.

XXXIII.

"But the calm summer season now was  
past.  
On as we drove, the equinoctial deep 290  
Ran mountains high before the howling  
blast,  
And many perished in the whirlwind's  
sweep.  
We gazed with terror on their gloomy  
sleep,  
Untaught that soon such anguish must  
ensue,  
Our hopes such harvest of affliction reap,  
That we the mercy of the waves should  
rue : 296  
We reached the western world, a poor  
devoted crew.

XXXIV.

"The pains and plagues that on our heads  
came down,  
Disease and famine, agony and fear, 299  
In wood or wilderness, in camp or town,

It would unman the firmest heart to  
hear.

All perished—all in one remorseless year,  
Husband and children! one by one, by  
sword

And ravenous plague, all perished: every  
tear

Dried up, despairing, desolate, on board  
A British ship I waked, as from a trance  
restored." 306

## XXXV.

Here paused she, of all present thought  
forlorn,

Nor voice, nor sound, that moment's pain  
expressed,

Yet Nature, with excess of grief o'er-  
borne,

From her full eyes their watery load re-  
leased. 310

He too was mute: and, ere her weeping  
ceased,

He rose, and to the ruin's portal went,  
And saw the dawn opening the silvery  
east

With rays of promise, north and south-  
ward sent;

And soon with crimson fire kindled the  
firmament. 315

## XXXVL

"O come," he cried, "come, after weary  
night

Of such rough storm, this happy change  
to view."

So forth she came, and eastward looked;  
the sight

Over her brow like dawn of gladness  
threw;

Upon her cheeks, to which its youthful  
hue 320

Seemed to return, dried the last lingering  
tear,

And from her grateful heart a fresh one  
drew:

The whilst her comrade to her pensive  
cheer

Tempered fit words of hope; and the lark  
warbled near.

## XXXVII.

They looked and saw a lengthening road,  
and wain 325

That rang down a bare slope not far re-  
mote:

The barrows glistened bright with drops  
of rain,

Whistled the waggoner with merry note,  
The cock far off sounded his clarion  
throat;

But town, or farm, or hamlet, none they  
viewed, 330

Only were told there stood a lonely cot  
A long mile thence. While thither they

pursued

Their way, the Woman thus her mournful  
tale renewed.

## XXXVIII.

"Peaceful as this immeasurable plain  
Is now, by beams of dawning light im-  
prest, 335

In the calm sunshine slept the glittering  
main;

The very ocean hath its hour of rest.  
I too forgot the heavings of my breast.

How quiet 'round me ship and ocean were!  
As quiet all within me. I was blest, 340

And looked, and fed upon the silent air  
Until it seemed to bring a joy to my de-  
spair.

## XXXIX.

"Ah! how unlike those late terrific sleeps,  
And groans that rage of racking famine

spoke;  
The unburied dead that lay in festering  
heaps, 345

The breathing pestilence that rose like  
smoke,

The shriek that from the distant battle  
broke,

The mine's dire earthquake, and the  
pallid host

Driven by the bomb's incessant thunder-  
stroke

To loathsome vaults, where heart-sick an-  
guish tossed, 350

Hope died, and fear itself in agony was  
lost!

XL.

"Some mighty gulf of separation passed,  
I seemed transported to another world;  
A thought resigned with pain, when from  
the mast  
The impatient mariner the sail unfurled,  
And, whistling, called the wind that  
hardly curled 356  
The silent sea. From the sweet thoughts  
of home  
And from all hope I was for ever hurled.  
For me—farthest from earthly port to  
roam  
Was best, could I but shun the spot where  
man might come. 360

XLI.

"And oft I thought (my fancy was so  
strong)  
That I, at last, a resting-place had found;  
'Here will I dwell,' said I, 'my whole life  
long,  
Roaming the illimitable waters round;  
Here will I live, of all but heaven dis-  
owned, 365  
And end my days upon the peaceful  
flood.'—  
To break my dream the vessel reached its  
bound;  
And homeless near a thousand homes I  
stood,  
And near a thousand tables pined and  
wanted food.

XLII.

"No help I sought; in sorrow turned  
adrift, 370  
Was hopeless, as if cast on some bare  
rock;  
Nor morsel to my mouth that day did lift,  
Nor raised my hand at any door to knock.  
I lay where, with his drowsy mates, the  
cock  
From the cross-timber of an outhouse  
hung: 375  
Dismally tolled, that night, the city clock!  
At morn my sick heart linger scarcely  
stung,  
Nor to the beggar's language could I fit  
my tongue.

XLIII.

"So passed a second day; and, when the  
third  
Was come, I tried in vain the crowd's  
resort. 380  
—In deep despair, by frightful wishes  
stirred,  
Near the sea-side I reached a ruined fort;  
There, pains which nature could no more  
support,  
With blindness linked, did on my vitals  
fall;  
And, after many interruptions short 385  
Of hideous sense, I sank, nor step could  
crawl:  
Unsought for was the help that did my  
life recall.

XLIV.

"Borne to a hospital, I lay with brain  
Drowsy and weak, and shattered memory;  
I heard my neighbours in their beds com-  
plain 390  
Of many things which never troubled me—  
Of feet still bustling round with busy  
glee,  
Of looks where common kindness had no  
part,  
Of service done with cold formality,  
Fretting the fever round the languid  
heart, 395  
And groans which, as they said, might  
make a dead man start.

XLV.

"These things just served to stir the slum-  
bering sense,  
Nor pain nor pity in my bosom raised.  
With strength did memory return; and,  
thence  
Dismissed, again on open day I gazed, 400  
At houses, men, and common light, a-  
mazed.  
The lanes I sought, and, as the sun retired,  
Came where beneath the trees a faggot  
blazed;  
The travellers saw me weep, my fate in-  
quired,  
And gave me food—and rest, more wel-  
come, more desired. 405

## XLVI.

"Rough potters seemed they, trading soberly  
 With panniered asses driven from door to door;  
 But life of happier sort set forth to me,  
 And other joys my fancy to allure—  
 The bag-pipe dinning on the midnight moor 410  
 In barn uplighted; and companions boon,  
 Well met from far with revelry secure  
 Among the forest glades, while jocund June  
 Rolled fast along the sky his warm and genial moon.

## XLVII.

"But ill they suited me—those journeys dark 415  
 O'er moor and mountain, midnight theft to hatch!  
 To charm the surly house-dog's faithful bark,  
 Or hang on tip-toe at the lifted latch.  
 The gloomy lantern, and the dim blue match,  
 The black disguise, the warning whistle shrill, 420  
 And ear still busy on its nightly watch,  
 Were not for me, brought up in nothing ill:  
 Besides, on griefs so fresh my thoughts were brooding still.

## XLVIII.

"What could I do, unaided and unblest?  
 My father! gone was every friend of thine: 425  
 And kindred of dead husband are at best  
 Small help; and, after marriage such as mine,  
 With little kindness would to me incline.  
 Nor was I then for toil or service fit;  
 My deep-drawn sighs no effort could confine; 430  
 In open air forgetful would I sit  
 Whole hours, with idle arms in moping sorrow knit.

## XLIX.

"The roads I paced, I loitered through the fields;  
 Contentedly, yet sometimes self-accused,  
 Trusted my life to what chance bounty yields, 435  
 Now coldly given, now utterly refused.  
 The ground I for my bed have often used:  
 But what afflicts my peace with keenest ruth,  
 Is that I have my inner self abused,  
 Forgone the home delight of constant truth, 440  
 And clear and open soul, so prized in fearless youth.

## L.

"Through tears the rising sun I oft have viewed,  
 Through tears have seen him towards that world descend  
 Where my poor heart lost all its fortitude:  
 Three years a wanderer now my course I bend— 445  
 Oh! tell me whither—for no earthly friend  
 Have I."—She ceased, and weeping turned away;  
 As if because her tale was at an end,  
 She wept; because she had no more to say  
 Of that perpetual weight which on her spirit lay. 450

## LI.

True sympathy the Sailor's looks expressed,  
 His looks—for pondering he was mute the while.  
 Of social Order's care for wretchedness,  
 Of Time's sure help to calm and reconcile,  
 Joy's second spring and Hope's long-treasured smile, 455  
 'Twas not for him to speak—a man so tried.  
 Yet, to relieve her heart, in friendly style  
 Proverbial words of comfort he applied,  
 And not in vain, while they went pacing side by side.

## LII.

Ere long, from heaps of turf, before their sight, 460

Together smoking in the sun's slant beam,  
Rise various wreaths that into one unite  
Which high and higher mounts with  
silver gleam :

Fair spectacle,—but instantly a scream  
Thence bursting shrill did all remark pre-  
vent ;

They paused, and heard a hoarser voice  
blaspheme,

And female cries. Their course they  
thither bent,

And met a man who foamed with anger  
vehement.

LIII.

A woman stood with quivering lips and  
pale,

And, pointing to a little child that lay  
Stretched on the ground, began a piteous  
tale ;

How in a simple freak of thoughtless play  
He had provoked his father, who straight-  
way,

As if each blow were deadlier than the  
last,

Struck the poor innocent. Pallid with  
dismay

The Soldier's Widow heard and stood  
aghast ;

And stern looks on the man her grey-  
haired Comrade cast.

LIV.

His voice with indignation rising high  
Such further deed in manhood's name  
forbade ;

The peasant, wild in passion, made reply  
With bitter insult and revilings sad ;  
Asked him in scorn what business there  
he had ;

What kind of plunder he was hunting  
now ;

The gallows would one day of him be  
glad ;—

Though inward anguish damped the  
Sailor's brow,

Yet calm he seemed as thoughts so  
poignant would allow.

LV.

Softly he stroked the child, who lay out-  
stretched

With face to earth ; and, as the boy turn-  
ed round

His battered head, a groan the Sailor  
fetched

As if he saw—there and upon that ground—  
Strange repetition of the deadly wound

He had himself inflicted. Through his  
brain

At once the griding iron passage found ;  
Deluge of tender thoughts then rushed  
again,

Nor could his sunken eyes the starting  
tear restrain.

LVI.

Within himself he said—What hearts  
have we !

The blessing this a father gives his child !  
Yet happy thou, poor boy ! compared with  
me,

Suffering not doing ill—fate far more mild.  
The stranger's looks and tears of wrath  
beguiled

The father, and relenting thoughts awoke ;  
He kissed his son—so all was reconciled.

Then, with a voice which inward trouble  
broke

Ere to his lips it came, the Sailor them  
bespoke.

LVII.

“Bad is the world, and hard is the world's  
law

Even for the man who wears the warmest  
fleece ;

Much need have ye that time more closely  
draw

The bond of nature, all unkindness cease,  
And that among so few there still be  
peace :

Else can ye hope but with such numerous  
foes

Your pains shall ever with your years  
increase ?”—

While from his heart the appropriate  
lesson flows,

A correspondent calm stole gently o'er his  
woes.

LVIII.

Forthwith the pair passed on ; and down  
they look

Into a narrow valley's pleasant scene 515  
 Where wreaths of vapour tracked a wind-  
 ing brook,  
 That babbled on through groves and  
 meadows green;  
 A low-roofed house peeped out the trees  
 between;  
 The dripping groves resound with cheerful  
 lays,  
 And melancholy lowings intervene 520  
 Of scattered herds, that in the meadow  
 graze,  
 Some amid lingering shade, some touched  
 by the sun's rays.

## LIX.

They saw and heard, and, winding with  
 the road  
 Down a thick wood, they dropt into the  
 vale;  
 Comfort by prouder mansions unbestowed  
 Their wearied frames, she hoped, would  
 soon regale. 526  
 Ere long they reached that cottage in the  
 dale:  
 It was a rustic inn;—the board was  
 spread,  
 The milk-maid followed with her brimming  
 pail,  
 And lustily the master carved the bread,  
 Kindly the housewife pressed, and they in  
 comfort fed. 531

## LX.

Their breakfast done, the pair, though  
 loth, must part;  
 Wanderers whose course no longer now  
 agrees.  
 She rose and bade farewell! and, while  
 her heart  
 Struggled with tears nor could its sorrow  
 ease, 535  
 She left him there; for, clustering round  
 his knees,  
 With his oak-staff the cottage children  
 played;  
 And soon she reached a spot o'erhung with  
 trees  
 And banks of ragged earth; beneath the  
 shade  
 Across the pebbly road a little runnel  
 strayed. 540

## LXI.

A cart and horse beside the rivulet stood;  
 Chequering the canvas roof the sunbeams  
 shone.  
 She saw the carman bend to scoop the  
 flood  
 As the wain fronted her,—wherein lay one,  
 A pale-faced Woman, in disease far gone.  
 The carman wet her lips as well behaved;  
 Bed under her lean body there was none,  
 Though even to die near one she most had  
 loved  
 She could not of herself those wasted  
 limbs have moved.

## LXII.

The Soldier's Widow learned with honest  
 pain 550  
 And homefelt force of sympathy sincere,  
 Why thus that worn-out wretch must  
 there sustain  
 The jolting road and morning air severe.  
 The wain pursued its way; and following  
 near  
 In pure compassion she her steps re-  
 traced 555  
 Far as the cottage. "A sad sight is here,"  
 She cried aloud; and forth ran out in haste  
 The friends whom she had left but a few  
 minutes past.

## LXIII.

While to the door with eager speed they  
 ran,  
 From her bare straw the Woman half  
 upraised 560  
 Her bony visage—gaunt and deadly wan;  
 No pity asking, on the group she gazed  
 With a dim eye, distracted and amazed;  
 Then sank upon her straw with feeble  
 moan.  
 Fervently cried the housewife—"God be  
 praised, 565  
 I have a house that I can call my own;  
 Nor shall she perish there, untended and  
 alone!"

## LXIV.

So in they bear her to the chimney seat,  
 And busily, though yet with fear, untie  
 Her garments, and, to warm her icy feet  
 And chafe her temples, careful hands  
 apply. 571

Nature reviving, with a deep-drawn sigh  
She strove, and not in vain, her head to  
rear;

Then said—"I thank you all; if I must  
die,

The God in heaven my prayers for you  
will hear; 575

Till now I did not think my end had been  
so near.

LXV.

"Barred every comfort labour could pro-  
cure,

Suffering what no endurance could as-  
suage,

I was compelled to seek my father's door,  
Though loth to be a burthen on his age.

But sickness stopped me in an early stage  
Of my sad journey; and within the wain

They placed me—there to end life's pil-  
grimage,

Unless beneath your roof I may remain:  
For I shall never see my father's door  
again. 585

LXVI.

"My life, Heaven knows, hath long been  
burthensome;

But, if I have not meekly suffered, meek  
May my end be! Soon will this voice be  
dumb:

Should child of mine e'er wander hither,  
speak

Of me, say that the worm is on my  
cheek.— 590

Torn from our hut, that stood beside the  
sea

Near Portland lighthouse in a lonesome  
creek,

My husband served in sad captivity  
On shipboard, bound till peace or death

\*should set him free.

LXVII.

"A sailor's wife I knew a widow's cares,  
Yet two sweet little ones partook my bed;

Hope cheered my dreams, and to my  
daily prayers 597

Our heavenly Father granted each day's  
bread;

Till one was found by stroke of violence  
dead,

Whose body near our cottage chanced to  
lie; 600

A dire suspicion drove us from our shed;  
In vain to find a friendly face we try,

Nor could we live together those poor  
boys and I;

LXVIII.

"For evil tongues made oath how on that  
day

My husband lurked about the neighbour-  
hood; 605

Now he had fled, and whither none could  
say,

And *he* had done the deed in the dark  
wood—

Near his own home!—but he was mild  
and good;

Never on earth was gentler creature seen;  
He'd not have robbed the raven of its  
food. 610

My husband's loving kindness stood be-  
tween

Me and all worldly harms and wrongs  
however keen."

LXIX.

Alas! the thing she told with labouring  
breath

The Sailor knew too well. That wicked-  
ness

His hand had wrought; and when, in the  
hour of death, 615

He saw his Wife's lips move his name to  
bless

With her last words, unable to suppress  
His anguish, with his heart he ceased to  
strive;

And, weeping loud in this extreme dis-  
tress,

He cried—"Do pity me! That thou  
shouldst live 620

I neither ask nor wish—forgive me, but  
forgive!"

LXX.

To tell the change that Voice within her  
wrought

Nature by sign or sound made no essay;  
A sudden joy surprised expiring thought.

And every mortal pang dissolved away.

Borne gently to a bed, in death she lay ;  
 Yet still, while over her the husband bent,  
 A look was in her face which seemed to say,  
 "Be blest : by sight of thee from heaven  
 was sent

Peace to my parting soul, the fulness of  
 content." 630

## LXXI.

*She* slept in peace,—his pulses throbbed  
 and stopped,

Breathless he gazed upon her face,—then  
 took

Her hand in his, and raised it, but both  
 dropped,

When on his own he cast a rueful look.

His ears were never silent ; sleep forsook

His burning eyelids stretched and stiff as  
 lead ; 636

All night from time to time under him  
 shook

The floor as he lay shuddering on his bed ;  
 And oft he groaned aloud, "O God, that  
 I were dead !"

## LXXII.

The Soldier's Widow lingered in the cot ;

And, when he rose, he thanked her pious  
 care 641

Through which his Wife, to that kind  
 shelter brought,

Died in his arms ; and with those thanks  
 a prayer

He breathed for her, and for that mer-  
 ciful pair.

The corse interred, not one hour he re-  
 mained 645

Beneath their roof, but to the open air  
 A burthen, now with fortitude sustained,  
 He bore within a breast where dreadful  
 quiet reigned.

## LXXIII.

Confirmed of purpose, fearlessly prepared  
 For act and suffering, to the city straight  
 He journeyed, and forthwith his crime  
 declared : 651

"And from your doom," he added, "now  
 I wait,

Nor let it linger long, the murderer's fate."

Not ineffectual was that piteous claim :

"O welcome sentence which will end  
 though late," 655

He said, "the pangs that to my conscience  
 came

Out of that deed. My trust, Saviour ! is  
 in thy name !"

## LXXIV.

His fate was pitied. Him in iron case  
 (Reader, forgive the intolerable thought)  
 They hung not :—no one on *his* form or  
 face 660

Could gaze, as on a show by idlers sought ;  
 No kindred sufferer, to his death-place

brought  
 By lawless curiosity or chance,

When into storm the evening sky is  
 wrought,

Upon his swinging corse an eye can  
 glance, 665

And drop, as he once dropped, in misera-  
 ble trance.

# The Borderers.

A TRAGEDY.

[Composed 1795-96. — Published 1842.]

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

|                                |                                |                         |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| MARMADUKE.                     | } Of the Band of<br>Borderers. | Forester.               |
| OSWALD.                        |                                | ELDRED, a Peasant.      |
| WALLACE.                       |                                | Peasant, Pilgrims, &c.  |
| LACY.                          |                                |                         |
| LENNOX.                        |                                | IDONEA.                 |
| HERBERT.                       |                                | Female Beggar.          |
| WILFRED, SERVANT to MARMADUKE. |                                | ELEANOR, Wife of ELDRD. |
| Host.                          |                                |                         |

SCENE, *Borders of England and Scotland.*

TIME, *The Reign of Henry III.*

READERS already acquainted with my Poems will recognise, in the following composition, some eight or ten lines, which I have not scrupled to retain in the places where they originally stood. It is proper however to add that they would not have been used elsewhere, if I had foreseen the time when I might be induced to publish this Tragedy.

February 23, 1842.

### ACT I.

"SCENE, *Road in a Wood.*

WALLACE and LACY.

Lacy. The Troop will be impatient;  
let us hie

Back to our post, and strip the Scottish  
Foray

Of their rich Spoil, ere they recross the  
Border.

—Pity that our young Chief will have no  
part

In this good service.

Wal. Rather let us grieve  
That, in the undertaking which has caused  
His absence, he hath sought, whate'er his  
aim,

Companionship with One of crooked ways,  
From whose perverted soul can come no  
good

To our confiding, open-hearted, Leader. 10

Lacy. True; and, remembering how  
the Band have proved

That Oswald finds small favour in our  
sight,

Well may we wonder he has gained such  
power

Over our much-loved Captain.

Wal. I have heard  
Of some dark deed to which in early life

His passion drove him—then a Voyager  
Upon the midland Sea. You knew his

bearing 17  
In Palestine?

Lacy. Where he despised alike  
Mohammedan and Christian. But enough;  
Let us begone—the Band may else be  
foiled. [Exeunt.]

Enter MARMADUKE and WILFRED.

Wil. Be cautious, my dear Master!

Mar. I perceive

That fear is like a cloak which old men  
huddle

About their love, as if to keep it warm.

*Wil.* Nay, but I grieve that we should  
part. This Stranger, 24

For such he is—

*Mar.* Your busy fancies, Wilfred,  
Might tempt me to a smile; but what of  
him?

*Wil.* You know that you have saved  
his life.

*Mar.* I know it.

*Wil.* And that he hates you!—Pardon  
me, perhaps

That word was hasty.

*Mar.* Fy! no more of it.

*Wil.* Dear Master! gratitude's a heavy  
burden 30

To a proud Soul.—Nobody loves this  
Oswald—

Yourself, you do not love him.

*Mar.* I do more,

I honour him. Strong feelings to his heart  
Are natural; and from no one can be learnt  
More of man's thoughts and ways than  
his experience 35

Has given him power to teach: and then  
for courage

And enterprise—what perils hath he  
shunned?

What obstacles hath he failed to over-  
come?

Answer these questions, from our common  
knowledge, 39

And be at rest.

*Wil.* Oh, Sir!

*Mar.* Peace, my good Wilfred;  
Repair to Liddesdale, and tell the Band  
I shall be with them in two days at  
farthest.

*Wil.* May He whose eye is over all  
protect you! *[Exit.]*

*Enter OSWALD (a bunch of plants in  
his hand).*

*Osw.* This wood is rich in plants and  
curious simples. 44

*Mar.* *(looking at them).* The wild rose,  
and the poppy, and the nightshade:

Which is your favourite, Oswald?

*Osw.* That which, while it is

Strong to destroy, is also strong to heal—

*[Looking forward.]*  
Not yet in sight!—We'll saunter here  
awhile;

They cannot mount the hill, by us unseen.

*Mar.* *(a letter in his hand).* It is no com-  
mon thing when one like you 50

Performs these delicate services, and  
therefore

I feel myself much bounden to you,  
Oswald;

'Tis a strange letter this!—You saw her  
write it?

*Osw.* And saw the tears with which she  
blotted it.

*Mar.* And nothing less would satisfy  
him?

*Osw.* No less; 55

For that another in his Child's affection  
Should hold a place, as if 'twere robbery,  
He seemed to quarrel with the very  
thought.

Besides, I know not what strange prejudice  
Is rooted in his mind; this Band of ours,  
Which you've collected for the noblest  
ends, 61

Along the confines of the Esk and Tweed  
To guard the Innocent—he calls us  
“Outlaws;”

And, for yourself, in plain terms he asserts  
This garb was taken up that indolence 65  
Might want no cover, and rapacity  
Be better fed.

*Mar.* Ne'er may I own the heart  
That cannot feel for one, helpless as he is.

*Osw.* Thou know'st me for a Man not  
easily moved,

Yet was I grievously provoked to think 70  
Of what I witnessed.

*Mar.* This day will suffice  
To end her wrongs.

*Osw.* But if the blind Man's tale  
Should yet be true?

*Mar.* Would it were possible!  
Did not the Soldier tell thee that himself,  
And others who survived the wreck,  
beheld 75

The Baron Herbert perish in the waves

Upon the coast of Cyprus?

*Osw.* Yes, even so,  
And I had heard the like before: in south

The tale of this his quondam Barony  
Is cunningly devised; and, on the back 80  
Of his forlorn appearance, could not fail  
To make the proud and vain his tribu-  
ries,

And stir the pulse of lazy charity.

The seignories of Herbert are in Devon;  
We, neighbours of the Esk and Tweed:  
'tis much 85

The Arch-impostor—

Mar. Treat him gently, Oswald;  
Though I have never seen his face,  
methinks,

There cannot come a day when I shall  
cease

To love him. I remember, when a Boy  
Of scarcely seven years' growth, beneath  
the Elm 90

That casts its shade over our village school,  
'Twas my delight to sit and hear Idonea  
Repeat her Father's terrible adventures,  
Till all the band of playmates wept to-  
gether;

And that was the beginning of my love. 95  
And, through all converse of our later  
years,

An image of this old Man still was present,  
When I had been most happy. Pardon me  
If this be idly spoken.

Osw. See, they come, 99

Two Travellers!

Mar. (points). The woman is Idonea.

Osw. And leading Herbert.

Mar. We must let them pass—  
This thicket will conceal us.

[They step aside.

Enter IDONEA, leading HERBERT blind.

Idon. Dear Father, you sigh deeply;  
ever since

We left the willow shade by the brook-  
side,

Your natural breathing has been troubled.

Her. Nay, 105

You are too fearful; yet must I confess,  
Our march of yesterday had better suited  
A firmer step than mine.

Idon. That dismal Moor—  
In spite of all the larks that cheered our  
path,

I never can forgive it: but how steadily

You paced along, when the bewildering  
moonlight 111

Mocked me with many a strange fantastic  
shape!—

I thought the Convent never would  
appear;

It seemed to move away from us: and yet  
That you are thus the fault is mine; for  
the air 115

Was soft and warm, no dew lay on the  
grass,

And midway on the waste ere night had  
fallen

I spied a Covert walled and roofed with  
sods—

A miniature; belike some Shepherd-boy,  
Who might have found a nothing-doing  
hour 120

Heavier than work, raised it: within that  
hut

We might have made a kindly bed of  
heath,

And thankfully there rested side by side  
Wrapped in our cloaks, and, with re-  
cruited strength,

Have hailed the morning sun. But  
cheerily, Father,— 125

That staff of yours, I could almost have  
heart

To fling't away from you: you make no  
use

Of me, or of my strength;—come, let me  
feel

That you do press upon me. There—  
indeed

You are quite exhausted. Let us rest  
awhile 130

On this green bank. [He sits down.

Her. (after some time). Idonea, you are  
silent,

And I divine the cause.

Idon. Do not reproach me:  
I pondered patiently your wish and will

When I gave way to your request; and  
now,

When I behold the ruins of that face, 135  
Those eyeballs dark—dark beyond hope  
of light,

And think that they were blasted for my  
sake,

The name of Marmaduke is blown away:

Father, I would not change that sacred feeling

For all this world can give.

*Her.* Nay, be composed: 140  
Few minutes gone a faintness overspread  
My frame, and I bethought me of two things

I ne'er had heart to separate—my grave,  
And thee, my Child!

*Idon.* Believe me, honoured Sire!  
'Tis weariness that breeds these gloomy fancies, 145

And you mistake the cause: you hear the woods

Resound with music, could you see the sun,

And look upon the pleasant face of Nature—

*Her.* I comprehend thee—I should be as cheerful

As if we two were twins; two songsters bred 150

In the same nest, my spring-time one with thine.

My fancies, fancies if they be, are such  
As come, dear Child! from a far deeper source

Than bodily weariness. While here we sit

I feel my strength returning. The bequest 155

Of thy kind Patroness, which to receive  
We have thus far adventured, will suffice  
To save thee from the extreme of penury;  
But when thy Father must lie down and die,

How wilt thou stand alone?

*Idon.* Is he not strong? 160  
Is he not valiant?

*Her.* Am I then so soon  
Forgotten? have my warnings passed so quickly

Out of thy mind? My dear, my only,  
Child;

Thou wouldst be leaning on a broken reed—

This Marmaduke—

*Idon.* O could you hear his voice: 165  
Alas! you do not know him. He is one  
(I wot not what ill tongue has wronged him with you)

All gentleness and love. His face be-  
speaks

A deep and simple meekness: and that Soul,

Which with the motion of a virtuous act  
Flashes a look of terror upon guilt, 171

Is, after conflict, quiet as the ocean,  
By a miraculous finger stilled at once.

*Her.* Unhappy Woman!

*Idon.* Nay, it was my duty  
Thus much to speak; but think not I forget— 175

Dear Father! how *could* I forget and live?—

You and the story of that doleful night  
When, Antioch blazing to her topmost towers,

You rushed into the murderous flames,  
returned

Blind as the grave, but, as you oft have told me, 180

Clasping your infant Daughter to your heart.

*Her.* Thy Mother too!—scarce had I gained the door,

I caught her voice; she threw herself upon me,

I felt thy infant brother in her arms;  
She saw my blasted face—a tide of soldiers 185

That instant rushed between us, and I heard

Her last death-shriek, distinct among a thousand.

*Idon.* Nay, Father, stop not; let me hear it all,

*Her.* Dear Daughter! precious relic of that time—

For my old age, it doth remain with thee  
To make it what thou wilt. Thou hast been told, 191

That when, on our return from Palestine,  
I found how my domains had been usurped,

I took thee in my arms, and we began  
Our wanderings together. Providence 195  
At length conducted us to Rossland,—there,

Our melancholy story moved a Stranger  
To take thee to her home—and for myself,

Soon after, the good Abbot of St. Cuthbert's

Supplied my helplessness with food and raiment, 200

And, as thou know'st, gave me that humble Cot

Where now we dwell.—For many years I bore

Thy absence, till old age and fresh infirmities

Exacted thy return, and our reunion.

I did not think that, during that long absence, 205

My Child, forgetful of the name of Herbert,

Had given her love to a wild Freebooter, Who here, upon the borders of the Tweed,

Doth prey alike on two distracted Countries, 209

Traitor to both.

*Idon.* Oh, could you hear his voice! I will not call on Heaven to vouch for me, But let this kiss speak what is in my heart.

*Enter a Peasant.*

*Pea.* Good morrow, Strangers! If you want a Guide,

Let me have leave to serve you!

*Idon.* My Companion Hath need of rest; the sight of Hut or Hostel 215

Would be most welcome.

*Pea.* Yon white hawthorn gained, You will look down into a dell, and there Will see an ash from which a sign-board hangs;

The house is hidden by the shade. Old Man,

You seem worn out with travel—shall I support you? 220

*Her.* I thank you; but, a resting-place so near,

'Twere wrong to trouble you.

*Pea.* God speed you both. *[Exit Peasant.]*

*Her.* Idonea, we must part. Be not alarmed—

'Tis but for a few days—a thought has struck me.

*Idon.* That I should leave you at this house, and thence 225

Proceed alone. It shall be so; for strength Would fail you ere our journey's end be reached.

*[Exit HERBERT supported by IDONEA.]*

*Re-enter MARMADUKE and OSWALD.*

*Mar.* This instant will we stop him—

*Osw.* Be not hasty, For sometimes, in despite of my conviction,

He tempted me to think the Story true; 'Tis plain he loves the Maid, and what he said 231

That savoured of aversion to thy name Appeared the genuine colour of his soul—Anxiety lest mischief should befall her After his death.

*Mar.* I have been much deceived.

*Osw.* But sure he loves the Maiden, and never love 236

Could find delight to nurse itself so strangely,

Thus to torment her with inventions!—death—

There must be truth in this.

*Mar.* Truth in his story! He must have felt it then, known what it was, 240

And in such wise to rack her gentle heart Had been a tenfold cruelty.

*Osw.* Strange pleasures

Do we poor mortals cater for ourselves! To see him thus provoke her tenderness

With tales of weakness and infirmity! 245 I'd wager on his life for twenty years.

*Mar.* We will not waste an hour in such a cause.

*Osw.* Why, this is noble! shake her off at once.

*Mar.* Her virtues are his instruments. —A Man

Who has so practised on the world's cold sense, 250

May well deceive his Child—What! leave her thus,

A prey to a deceiver?—no—no—no—

'Tis but a word and then—

*Osw.* Something is here More than we see, or whence this strong aversion?

Marmaduke! I suspect unworthy tales

Have reached his ear—you have had  
enemies. 256

*Mar.* Enemies!—of his own coinage.

*Osw.* That may be,  
But wherefore slight protection such as  
you

Have power to yield? perhaps he looks  
elsewhere.—

I am perplexed.

*Mar.* What hast thou heard or seen?

*Osw.* No—no—the thing stands clear  
of mystery; 261  
(As you have said) he coins himself the  
slander

With which he taints her ear;—for a  
plain reason;

He reads the presence of a virtuous  
man

Like you; he knows your eye would  
search his heart, 265

Your justice stamp upon his evil deeds  
The punishment they merit. All is plain:  
It cannot be—

*Mar.* What cannot be?

*Osw.* Yet that a Father  
Should in his love admit no rivalry,  
And torture thus the heart of his own  
Child— 270

*Mar.* Nay, you abuse my friendship!

*Osw.* Heaven forbid!—  
There was a circumstance, trifling in-  
deed—

It struck me at the time—yet I believe  
I never should have thought of it again  
But for the scene which we by chance  
have witnessed. 275

*Mar.* What is your meaning?

*Osw.* Two days gone I saw,  
Though at a distance and he was dis-  
guised,  
Hovering round Herbert's door, a man  
whose figure  
Resembled much that cold voluptuary,  
The villain, Clifford. He hates you, and  
he knows 280

Where he can stab you deepest.  
*Mar.* Clifford never  
Would stoop to skulk about a Cottage  
door—

It could not be.

*Osw.* And yet I now remember

That, when your praise was warm upon  
my tongue,

And the blind Man was told how you had  
rescued 285

A maiden from the ruffian violence  
Of this same Clifford, he became im-  
patient

And would not hear me.

*Mar.* No—it cannot be—  
I dare not trust myself with such a  
thought—

Yet whence this strange aversion? You  
are a man 290

Not used to rash conjectures—

*Osw.* If you deem it  
A thing worth further notice, we must act  
With caution, sift the matter artfully.

[*Exeunt MARMADUKE and OSWALD.*]

SCENE, *The door of the Hostel.*

HERBERT, IDONEA, and Host.

*Her. (seated).* As I am dear to you, re-  
member, Child!

This last request.

*Idon.* You know me, Sire; farewell!

*Her.* And are you going then? Come,  
come, Idonea, 295

We must not part,—I have measured  
many a league

When these old limbs had need of rest,—  
and now

I will not play the sluggard.

*Idon.* Nay, sit down.

[*Turning to Host.*]

Good Host, such tendance as you would  
expect 300

From your own Children, if yourself were  
sick,

Let this old Man find at your hands;  
poor Leader, [*Looking at the dog.*]

We soon shall meet again. If thou neglect  
This charge of thine, then ill befall thee!

—Look,

The little fool is loth to stay behind. 305  
Sir Host! by all the love you bear to

courtesy,  
Take care of him, and feed the truant  
well.

*Host.* Fear not, I will obey you;—but  
One so young,

And One so fair, it goes against my heart  
That you should travel unattended, Lady!—  
I have a palfrey and a groom: the lad 311  
Shall squire you, (would it not be better,  
Sir?)

And for less fee than I would let him run  
For any lady I have seen this twelve-  
month.

*Idon.* You know, Sir, I have been too  
long your guard 315  
Not to have learnt to laugh at little fears.  
Why, if a wolf should leap from out a  
thicket,

A look of mine would send him scouring  
back,

Unless I differ from the thing I am 319  
When you are by my side.

*Her.* Idonea, wolves  
Are not the enemies that move my fears.

*Idon.* No more, I pray, of this. Three  
days at farthest

Will bring me back—protect him, Saints  
—farewell! [*Exit IDONEA.*]

*Host.* 'Tis never drouth with us—  
St. Cutlibert and his Pilgrims,  
Thanks to them, are to us a stream of  
comfort: 325

Pity the Maiden did not wait a while;  
She could not, Sir, have failed of company.

*Her.* Now she is gone, I fain would  
call her back.

*Host. (calling).* Holla!

*Her.* No, no, the business must be  
done.—

What means this riotous noise?

*Host.* The villagers  
Are flocking in—a wedding festival— 331  
That's all—God save you, Sir.

*Enter OSWALD.*

*Osw.* Ha! as I live,  
The Baron Herbert.

*Host.* Mercy, the Baron Herbert!

*Osw.* So far into your journey! on my  
life,

You are a lusty Traveller. But how fare  
you? 335

*Her.* Well as the wreck I am permits.  
And you, Sir?

*Osw.* I do not see Idonea.

*Her.* Dutiful Girl,

She is gone before, to spare my weariness.  
But what has brought you hither?

*Osw.* A slight affair,  
That will be soon despatched.

*Her.* Did Marmaduke 340  
Receive that letter?

*Osw.* Be at peace.—The tie  
Is broken, you will hear no more of him.

*Her.* This is true comfort, thanks a  
thousand times!—

That noise!—would I had gone with her  
as far

As the Lord Clifford's Castle: I have  
heard 345

That, in his milder moods, he has ex-  
pressed

Compassion for me. His influence is great  
With Henry, our good King;—the Baron  
might

Have heard my suit, and urged my plea  
at Court.

No matter—he's a dangerous Man.—That  
noise!— 350

'Tis too disorderly for sleep or rest.  
Idonea would have fears for me,—the  
Convent

Will give me quiet lodging. You have  
a boy, good Host,

And he must lead me back.

*Osw.* You are most lucky;  
I have been waiting in the wood hard by  
For a companion—here he comes; our  
journey 356

*Enter MARMADUKE.*

Lies on your way; accept us as your  
Guides.

*Her.* Alas! I creep so slowly.

*Osw.* Never fear;  
We'll not complain of that.

*Her.* My limbs are stiff  
And need repose. Could you but wait  
an hour? 360

*Osw.* Most willingly!—Come, let me  
lead you in,

And, while you take your rest, think not  
of us;

We'll stroll into the wood; lean on my  
arm.

[*Conducts HERBERT into the house.*]

*Exit MARMADUKE.*

*Enter Villagers.*

*Osw. (to himself coming out of the Hostel).*

I have prepared a most apt Instrument—

The Vagrant must, no doubt, be loitering somewhere 365

About this ground; she hath a tongue well skilled,

By mingling natural matter of her own  
With all the daring fictions I have taught  
her,

To win belief, such as my plot requires.

[*Exit OSWALD.*]

*Enter more Villagers, a Musician among them.*

*Host (to them).* Into the court, my  
Friend, and perch yourself 370

Aloft upon the elm-tree. Pretty Maids,  
Garlands and flowers, and cakes and  
merry thoughts,

Are here, to send the sun into the west  
More speedily than you belike would  
wish.

SCENE changes to the Wood adjoining the  
Hostel—*MARMADUKE and OSWALD entering.*

*Mar.* I would fain hope that we deceive  
ourselves: 375

When first I saw him sitting there, alone,  
It struck upon my heart I know not how.

*Osw.* To-day will clear up all.—You  
marked a Cottage,

That ragged Dwelling, close beneath a  
rock

By the brook-side: it is the abode of One,  
A Maiden innocent till ensnared by  
Clifford, 381

Who soon grew weary of her; but, alas!  
What she had seen and suffered turned  
her brain.

Cast off by her Betrayer, she dwells alone,  
Nor moves her hands to any needful  
work: 385

She eats her food which every day the  
peasants

Bring to her hut; and so the Wretch has  
lived

Ten years; and no one ever heard her  
voice;

But every night at the first stroke of twelve  
She quits her house and, in the neigh-  
bouring Churchyard 390

Upon the self-same spot, in rain or storm,  
She paces out the hour 'twixt twelve and  
one—

She paces round and round an Infant's  
grave,

And in the Churchyard sod her feet have  
worn

A hollow ring; they say it is knee-  
deep— 395

Ah! what is here?

[*A female Beggar rises up, rubbing her eyes as if in sleep—a Child in her arms.*]

*Beg.* Oh! Gentlemen, I thank you;  
I've had the saddest dream that ever  
troubled

The heart of living creature.—My poor  
Babe

Was crying, as I thought, crying for  
bread

When I had none to give him; where-  
upon 400

I put a slip of foxglove in his hand,  
Which pleased him so, that he was  
hushed at once:

When into one of those same spotted bells  
A bee came darting, which the Child with  
joy 404

Imprisoned there, and held it to his ear,  
And suddenly grew black, as he would die.

*Mar.* We have no time for this, my  
babbling Gossip;  
Here's what will comfort you.

[*Gives her money.*]

*Beg.* The Saints reward you  
For this good deed!—Well, Sirs, this  
passed away; 409

And afterwards I fancied, a strange dog,  
Trotting alone along the beaten road,  
Came to my child as by my side he slept,  
And, fondling, licked his face, then on a  
sudden

Snapped fierce to make a morsel of his  
head:

But here he is, [*kissing the Child*] it must  
have been a dream. 415

*Osw.* When next inclined to sleep,  
take my advice

And put your head, good Woman, under cover.

*Beg.* Oh, Sir, you would not talk thus, if you knew

What life is this of ours, how sleep will master

The weary-worm.—You gentlefolk have got 420

Warm chambers to your wish. I'd rather be

A stone than what I am.—But two nights gone,

The darkness overtook me—wind and rain Beat hard upon my head—and yet I saw

A glow-worm, through the covert of the furze, 425

Shine calmly as if nothing ailed the sky: At which I half accused the God in

Heaven.—

You must forgive me.

*Osw.* Ay, and if you think The Fairies are to blame, and you should chide

Your favourite saint—no matter—this good day 430

Has made amends.

*Beg.* Thanks to you both; but,

Oh Sir!

How would you like to travel on whole hours

As I have done, my eyes upon the ground,

Expecting still, I knew not how, to find A piece of money glittering through the

dust? 435

*Mar.* This woman is a prater. Pray, good Lady!

Do you tell fortunes?

*Beg.* Oh Sir, you are like the rest. This Little-one—it cuts me to the heart—

Well! they might turn a beggar from their doors,

But there are Mothers who can see the Babe 440

Here at my breast, and ask me where I bought it:

This they can do, and look upon my face— But you, Sir, should be kinder.

*Mar.* Come hither, Fathers, And learn what nature is from this poor

Wretch!

*Beg.* Ay, Sir, there's nobody that feels for us. 445

Why now—but yesterday I overtook A blind old Greybeard and accosted him, I th' name of all the Saints, and by the Mass

He should have used me better!—Charity! If you can melt a rock, he is your man;

But I'll be even with him—here again 451 Have I been waiting for him.

*Osw.*

Well, but softly,

Who is it that hath wronged you?

*Beg.*

Mark you me;

I'll point him out;—a Maiden is his guide, Lovely as Spring's first rose; a little dog,

Tied by a woollen cord, moves on before With look as sad as he were dumb; the

cur, 457

I owe him no ill will, but in good sooth

He does his Master credit.

*Mar.*

As I live,

'Tis Herbert and no other!

*Beg.*

'Tis a feast to see him,

Lank as a ghost and tall, his shoulders bent, 461

And long beard white with age—yet evermore,

As if he were the only Saint on earth,

He turns his face to heaven.

*Osw.*

But why so violent

Against this venerable Man?

*Beg.*

I'll tell you: 465

He has the very hardest heart on earth;

I had as lief turn to the Friar's school

And knock for entrance, in mid holiday.

*Mar.* But to your story.

*Beg.*

I was saying, Sir—

Well!—he has often spurned me like a toad, 470

But yesterday was worse than all; at last

I overtook him, Sirs, my Babe and I,

And begged a little aid for charity:

But he was snappish as a cottage cur.

Well then, says I—I'll out with it; at which 475

I cast a look upon the Girl, and felt

As if my heart would burst; and so I left him.

*Osw.*

I think, good Woman, you are the

very person

Whom, but some few days past, I saw in  
Eskdale, 479  
At Herbert's door.

*Beg.* Ay; and if truth were known  
I have good business there.

*Osw.* I met you at the threshold,  
And he seemed angry.

*Beg.* Angry! well he might;  
And long as I can stir I'll dog him.—  
Yesterday,

To serve me so, and knowing that he owes  
The best of all he has to me and mine. 485  
But 'tis all over now. That good old  
Lady

Has left a power of riches; and I say it,  
If there's a lawyer in the land, the knave  
Shall give me half.

*Osw.* What's this?—I fear, good Woman,  
You have been insolent.

*Beg.* And there's the Baron,  
I spied him skulking in his peasant's  
dress. 491

*Osw.* How say you? in disguise?—

*Mar.* But what's your business  
With Herbert or his Daughter?

*Beg.* Daughter! truly—  
But how's the day?—I fear, my little  
Boy,

We've overslept ourselves.—Sirs, have  
you seen him? [*Offers to go.*]

*Mar.* I must have more of this;—you  
shall not stir 496

An inch, till I am answered. Know you  
aught

That doth concern this Herbert?

*Beg.* You are provoked,  
And will misuse me, Sir!

*Mar.* No trifling, Woman!—

*Osw.* You are as safe as in a sanctuary; 500  
Speak.

*Mar.* Speak!

*Beg.* He is a most hard-hearted Man.

*Mar.* Your life is at my mercy.

*Beg.* Do not harm me,  
And I will tell you all!—You know not,  
Sir,

What strong temptations press upon the  
Poor.

*Osw.* Speak out.

*Beg.* Oh, Sir, I've been a wicked  
Woman. 505

*Osw.* Nay, but speak out!

*Beg.* He flattered me, and said  
What harvest it would bring us both;  
and so

I parted with the Child.

*Mar.* Parted with whom?

*Beg.* Idonea, as he calls her; but the Girl  
Is mine.

*Mar.* Yours, Woman! are you Her-  
bert's wife? 510

*Beg.* Wife, Sir! his wife—not I; my  
husband, Sir,

Was of Kirkoswald—many a snowy  
winter

We've weathered out together. My poor  
Gilfred!

He has been two years in his grave.

*Mar.* Enough.

*Osw.* We've solved the riddle—Mis-  
creant!

*Mar.* Do you, 515  
Good Dame, repair to Liddesdale and  
wait

For my return; be sure you shall have  
justice.

*Osw.* A lucky woman!—go, you have  
done good service. [*Aside.*]

*Mar.* (*to himself*). Eternal praises on the  
power that saved her!— 519

*Osw.* (*gives her money*). Here's for your  
little boy, and when you christen him  
I'll be his Godfather.

*Beg.* Oh Sir, you are merry with me.  
In grange or farm this Hundred scarcely  
owns

A dog that does not know me.—These  
good Folks,—

For love of God I must not pass their  
doors;

But I'll be back with my best speed: for  
you— 525

God bless and thank you both, my gentle  
Masters. [*Exit Beggar.*]

*Mar.* (*to himself*). The cruel Viper!—  
Poor devoted Maid,

Now I do love thee.

*Osw.* I am thunderstruck,

*Mar.* Where's she—holla!

[*Calling to the Beggar, who returns;  
he looks at her stedfastly.*]

You are Idonea's Mother!—

Nay, be not terrified—it does me good 530  
To look upon you.

*Osw. (interrupting).* In a peasant's  
dress

You saw, who was it?

*Beg.* Nay, I dare not speak;  
He is a man, if it should come to his  
ears

I never shall be heard of more.

*Osw.* Lord Clifford?

*Beg.* What can I do? believe me, gentle  
Sirs, 535

I love her, though I dare not call her  
daughter.

*Osw.* Lord Clifford—did you see him  
talk with Herbert?

*Beg.* Yes, to my sorrow—under the  
great oak

At Herbert's door—and when he stood  
beside

The blind Man—at the silent Girl he  
looked 540

With such a look—it makes me tremble,  
Sir,

To think of it.

*Osw.* Enough! you may depart.

*Mar. (to himself)* Father!—to God him-  
self we cannot give 543

A holier name; and, under such a mask,  
To lead a Spirit, spotless as the blessed,  
To that abhorred den of brutish vice!—  
Oswald, the firm foundation of my life  
Is going from under me; these strange  
discoveries—

Looked at from every point of fear or  
hope,

Duty, or love—involve, I feel, my ruin. 550

## ACT II.

SCENE, *A Chamber in the Hostel*—OSWALD  
*alone, rising from a Table on which he  
had been writing.*

*Osw.* They chose him for their Chief!—  
what covert part

He in the preference, modest Youth,  
might take,

I neither know nor care. The insult bred  
More of contempt than hatred; both are  
frown;

That either e'er existed is my shame: 555  
'Twas a dull spark—a most unnatural fire  
That died the moment the air breathed  
upon it.

—These fools of feeling are mere birds of  
winter

That haunt some barren island of the  
north,

Where, if a famishing man stretch forth  
his hand, 560

They think it is to feed them. I have left  
him

To solitary meditation;—now  
For a few swelling phrases, and a flash  
Of truth, enough to dazzle and to blind,  
And he is mine for ever—here he comes.

*Enter MARMADUKE.*

*Mar.* These ten years she has moved  
her lips all day 566  
And never speaks!

*Osw.* Who is it?

*Mar.* I have seen her.

*Osw.* Oh! the poor tenant of that  
ragged homestead,

Her whom the Monster, Clifford, drove to  
madness.

*Mar.* I met a peasant near the spot; he  
told me, 570

These ten years she had sate all day alone  
Within those empty walls.

*Osw.* I too have seen her;  
Chancing to pass this way some six  
months gone,

At midnight, I betook me to the Church-  
yard:

The moon shone clear, the air was still,  
so still 575

The trees were silent as the graves be-  
neath them.

Long did I watch, and saw her pacing  
round

Upon the self-same spot, still round and  
round,

Her lips for ever moving.

*Mar.* At her door  
Rooted I stood; for, looking at the  
woman, 580

I thought I saw the skeleton of Idonea.

*Osw.* But the pretended Father—

*Mar.* Earthly law

Measures not crimes like his.

*Osw.* We rank not, happily,  
With those who take the spirit of their  
rule

From that soft class of devotees who feel  
Reverence for life so deeply, that they  
spare 586

The verminous brood, and cherish what  
they spare

While feeding on their bodies. Would  
that Idonea

Were present, to the end that we might  
hear

What she can urge in his defence; she  
loves him. 590

*Mar.* Yes, loves him; 'tis a truth that  
multiplies

His guilt a thousand-fold.

*Osw.* 'Tis most perplexing:  
What must be done?

*Mar.* We will conduct her hither;  
These walls shall witness it—from first  
to last

He shall reveal himself.

*Osw.* Happy are we, 595  
Who live in these disputed tracts, that own  
No law but what each man makes for  
himself;

Here justice has indeed a field of triumph.

*Mar.* Let us begone and bring her  
hither:—here

The truth shall be laid open, his guilt  
proved 600

Before her face. The rest be left to me.

*Osw.* You will be firm: but though we  
well may trust

The issue to the justice of the cause,  
Caution must not be flung aside; re-  
member,

Yours is no common life. Self-stationed  
here, 605

Upon these savage confines, we have  
seen you

Stand like an isthmus 'twixt two stormy  
seas

That oft have checked their fury at your  
bidding.

'Mid the deep holds of Solway's mossy  
waste,

Your single virtue has transformed a  
Band 610

Of fierce barbarians into Ministers  
Of peace and order. Aged men with tears  
Have blessed their steps, the fatherless  
retire 613

For shelter to their banners. But it is,  
As you must needs have deeply felt, it is  
In darkness and in tempest that we seek  
The majesty of Him who rules the world.  
Benevolence, that has not heart to use  
The wholesome ministry of pain and evil,  
Becomes at last weak and contemptible.  
Your generous qualities have won due  
praise, 621

But vigorous Spirits look for something  
more

Than Youth's spontaneous products; and  
to-day

You will not disappoint them; and here  
after—

*Mar.* You are wasting words; hear me  
then once for all: 625

You are a Man—and therefore, if com-  
passion,

Which to our kind is natural as life,  
Be known unto you, you will love this  
Woman,

Even as I do; but I should loathe the  
light,

If I could think one weak or partial  
feeling— 630

*Osw.* You will forgive me—

*Mar.* If I ever knew  
My heart, could penetrate its inmost  
core,

'Tis at this moment.—Oswald, I have  
loved

To be the friend and father of the  
oppressed.

A comforter of sorrow;—there is some-  
thing 635

Which looks like a transition in my soul,  
And yet it is not.—Let us lead him  
hither.

*Osw.* Stoop for a moment; 'tis an act  
of justice;

And where's the triumph if the delegate  
Must fall in the execution of his office? 640

The deed is done—if you will have it so—  
Here where we stand—that tribe of vul-  
gar wretches

(You saw them gathering for the festival)

Rush in—the villains seize us—

*Mar.* Seize!

*Osw.* Yes, they—

Men who are little given to sift and weigh— 643

Would wreak on us the passion of the moment.

*Mar.* The cloud will soon disperse—farewell—but stay,

Thou wilt relate the story.

*Osw.* Am I neither

To bear a part in this Man's punishment,  
Nor be its witness?

*Mar.* I had many hopes 650

That were most dear to me, and some will bear

To be transferred to thee.

*Osw.* When I'm dishonoured!

*Mar.* I would preserve thee. How may this be done?

*Osw.* By showing that you look beyond the instant.

A few leagues hence we shall have open ground, 655

And nowhere upon earth is place so fit  
To look upon the deed. Before we enter

The barren Moor, hangs from a beetling rock

The shattered Castle in which Clifford oft

Has held infernal orgies—with the gloom,  
And very superstition of the place, 661

Seasoning his wickedness. The Debauchee  
Would there perhaps have gathered the first fruits

Of this mock Father's guilt.

*Enter Host conducting HERBERT.*

*Host.* The Baron Herbert

Attends your pleasure.

*Osw.* (to Host). We are ready—

(to HERBERT) Sir! 665

I hope you are refreshed.—I have just written

A notice for your Daughter, that she may know

What is become of you.—You'll sit down and sign it;

'Twill glad her heart to see her father's signature.

[Gives the letter he had written.]

*Her.* Thanks for your care.

[Sits down and writes. Exit Host.]

*Osw.* (aside to MARMADUKE). Perhaps it would be useful 670

That you too should subscribe your name.

[MARMADUKE overlooks HERBERT—then writes—examines the letter eagerly.]

*Mar.* I cannot leave this paper.

[He puts it up, agitated.]

*Osw.* (aside). Dastard! Come.

[MARMADUKE goes towards HERBERT and supports him—MARMADUKE tremblingly beckons OSWALD to take his place.]

*Mar.* (as he quits HERBERT). There is a palsy in his limbs—he shakes.

[Exit OSWALD and HERBERT—MARMADUKE following.]

SCENE changes to a Wood—a Group of Pilgrims and IDONEA with them.

*First Pil.* A grove of darker and more lofty shade

I never saw.

*Sec. Pil.* The music of the birds 675  
Drops deadened from a roof so thick with leaves.

*Old Pil.* This news! it made my heart leap up with joy.

*Idon.* I scarcely can believe it.

*Old Pil.* Myself, I heard

The Sheriff read, in open Court, a letter  
Which purported it was the royal pleasure 680

The Baron Herbert, who, as was supposed,  
Had taken refuge in this neighbourhood,  
Should be forthwith restored. The hearing, Lady,

Filled my dim eyes with tears.—When I returned

From Palestine, and brought with me a heart, 685

Though rich in heavenly, poor in earthly, comfort,

I met your Father, then a wandering Outcast:

He had a Guide, a Shepherd's boy; but grieved

He was that One so young should pass his youth

In such sad service; and he parted with him. 690

We joined our tales of wretchedness together,

And begged our daily bread from door to door.

I talk familiarly to you, sweet Lady!

For once you loved me.

*Idon.* You shall back with me  
And see your Friend again. The good old Man 695

Will be rejoiced to greet you.

*Old Pil.* It seems but yesterday  
That a fierce storm o'ertook us, worn with travel,

In a deep wood remote from any town.

A cave that opened to the road presented  
A friendly shelter, and we entered in. 700

*Idon.* And I was with you?

*Old Pil.* If indeed 'twas you—  
But you were then a tottering Little-  
one—

We sate us down. The sky grew dark  
and darker:

I struck my flint, and built up a small  
fire

With rotten boughs and leaves, such as  
the winds 705

Of many autumns in the cave had piled.  
Meanwhile the storm fell heavy on the  
woods;

Our little fire sent forth a cheering  
warmth

And we were comforted, and talked of  
comfort;

But 'twas an angry night, and o'er our  
heads 710

The thunder rolled in peals that would  
have made

A sleeping man uneasy in his bed.

O Lady, you have need to love your  
Father.

His voice—methinks I hear it now, his  
voice

When, after a broad flash that filled the  
cave, 715

He said to me, that he had seen his  
Child,

A face (no cherub's face more beautiful)  
Revealed by lustre brought with it from  
heaven;

And it was you, dear Lady!

*Idon.* God be praised,  
That I have been his comforter till now!  
And will be so through every change of  
fortune 721

And every sacrifice his peace requires.—  
Let us begone with speed, that he may  
hear

These joyful tidings from no lips but  
mine. 724

[*Exeunt IDONEA and Pilgrims.*]

SCENE, *The Area of a half-ruined Castle—  
on one side the entrance to a dungeon—  
OSWALD and MARMADUKE pacing back-  
wards and forwards.*

*Mar.* 'Tis a wild night.

*Osw.* I'd give my cloak and bonnet  
For sight of a warm fire.

*Mar.* The wind blows keen;  
My hands are numb.

*Osw.* Ha! ha! 'tis nipping cold.  
[*Blowing his fingers.*]

I long for news of our brave Comrades;  
Lacy

Would drive those Scottish Rovers to  
their dens

If once they blew a horn this side the  
Tweed. 730

*Mar.* I think I see a second range of  
Towers;

This castle has another Area—come,  
Let us examine it.

*Osw.* 'Tis a bitter night;  
I hope Idonea is well housed. That  
horseman,

Who at full speed swept by us where the  
wood 735

Roared in the tempest, was within an ace  
Of sending to his grave our precious  
Charge: \*

That would have been a vile mischance.

*Mar.* It would.

*Osw.* Justice had been most cruelly  
defrauded.

*Mar.* Most cruelly.

*Osw.* As up the steep we clomb,  
I saw a distant fire in the north-east; 741  
I took it for the blaze of Cheviot Beacon:  
With proper speed our quarters may be  
gained

To-morrow evening.

[*Looks restlessly towards the mouth  
of the dungeon.*]

*Mar.* When, upon the plank,  
I had led him 'cross the torrent, his voice  
blessed me: 745

You could not hear, for the foam beat the  
rocks

With deafening noise,—the benediction  
fell

Back on himself; but changed into a  
curse.

*Osw.* As well indeed it might.

*Mar.* And this you deem  
The fittest place?

*Osw. (aside).* He is growing pitiful. 750

*Mar. (listening).* What an odd moan-  
ing that is!—

*Osw.* Mighty odd

The wind should pipe a little, while we  
stand

Cooling our heels in this way!—I'll begin  
And count the stars.

*Mar. (still listening).* That dog of his,  
you are sure,

Could not come after us—he *must* have  
perished; 755

The torrent would have dashed an oak to  
splinters.

You said you did not like his looks—  
that he

Would trouble us; if he were here again,  
I swear the sight of him would quail me  
more

Than twenty armies.

*Osw.* How?

*Mar.* The old blind Man,  
When you had told him the mischance,  
was troubled 761

Even to the shedding of some natural tears  
Into the torrent over which he hung,  
Listening in vain.

*Osw.* He has a tender heart!

[*OSWALD offers to go down into the  
dungeon.*]

*Mar.* How now, what mean you?

*Osw.* Truly, I was going  
To waken our stray Baron. Were there  
not 766

A farm or dwelling-house within five  
leagues,

We should deserve to wear a cap and  
bells,

Three good round years, for playing the  
fool here

In such a night as this.

*Mar.* Stop, stop.

*Osw.* Perhaps, 770

You'd better like we should descend  
together,

And lie down by his side—what say you  
to it?

Three of us—we should keep each other  
warm:

I'll answer for it that our four-legged  
friend

Shall not disturb us; further I'll not  
engage; 775

Come, come, for manhood's sake!

*Mar.* These drowsy shiverings,  
This mortal stupor which is creeping over  
me,

What do they mean? were this my single  
body

Opposed to armies, not a nerve would  
tremble:

Why do I tremble now?—Is not the  
depth 780

Of this Man's crimes beyond the reach of  
thought?

And yet, in plumbing the abyss for  
judgment,

Something I strike upon which turns my  
mind

Back on herself, I think, again—my  
breast 784

Concentres all the terrors of the Universe:  
I look at him and tremble like a child.

*Osw.* Is it possible?

*Mar.* One thing you noticed not:  
Just as we left the glen a clap of thunder  
Burst on the mountains with hell-rousing  
force.

This is a time, said he, when guilt may  
shudder; 790

But there's a Providence for them who  
walk

In helplessness, when innocence is with  
them.

At this audacious blasphemy, I thought  
The spirit of vengeance seemed to ride  
the air.

- Osw.* Why are you not the man you were that moment? 795  
[*He draws MARMADUKE to the dungeon.*]
- Mar.* You say he was asleep,—look at this arm,  
And tell me if 'tis fit for such a work.  
*Oswald, Oswald!* [*Leans upon OSWALD.*]
- Osw.* This is some sudden seizure!
- Mur.* A most strange faintness,—will you hunt me out  
A draught of water?
- Osw.* Nay, to see you thus 800  
Moves me beyond my bearing.—I will try  
To gain the torrent's brink. [*Exit OSWALD.*]
- Mar.* (*after a pause*). It seems an age  
Since that Man left me.—No, I am not lost.
- Her.* (*at the mouth of the dungeon*). Give me your hand; where are you, Friends? and tell me  
How goes the night.
- Mar.* 'Tis hard to measure time  
In such a weary night, and such a place. 806
- Her.* I do not hear the voice of my friend Oswald.
- Mar.* A minute past, he went to fetch a draught  
Of water from the torrent. 'Tis, you'll say,  
A cheerless beverage.
- Her.* How good it was in you  
To stay behind!—Hearing at first no answer, 811  
I was alarmed.
- Mar.* No wonder; this is a place  
That well may put some fears into your heart.
- Her.* Why so? a roofless rock had been a comfort,  
Storm-beaten and bewildered as we were; 815  
And in a night like this to lend your cloaks  
To make a bed for me!—My Girl will weep  
When she is told of it.
- Mar.* This Daughter of yours  
Is very dear to you.
- Her.* Oh! but you are young;  
Over your head twice twenty years must roll, 820
- With all their natural weight of sorrow and pain,  
Ere can be known to you how much a Father  
May love his Child.  
*Mar.* Thank you, old Man, for this! [*Aside.*]
- Her.* Fallen am I, and worn out, a useless Man;  
Kindly have you protected me to-night, 825  
And no return have I to make but prayers;  
May you in age be blest with such a daughter!—  
When from the Holy Land I had returned  
Sightless, and from my heritage was driven,  
A wretched Outcast—but this strain of thought 830  
Would lead me to talk fondly.
- Mar.* Do not fear;  
Your words are precious to my ears; go on.
- Her.* You will forgive me, but my heart runs over.  
When my old Leader slipped into the flood  
And perished, what a piercing outcry you 835  
Sent after him. I have loved you ever since.
- You start—where are we?
- Mar.* Oh, there is no danger;  
The cold blast struck me.
- Her.* 'Twas a foolish question.
- Mar.* But when you were an Outcast?—Heaven is just;  
Your piety would not miss its due reward; 840  
The little Orphan then would be your succour,  
And do good service, though she knew it not.
- Her.* I turned me from the dwellings of my Fathers,  
Where none but those who trampled on my rights  
Seemed to remember me. To the wide world 845

I bore her in my arms; her looks won pity;

She was my Raven in the wilderness,  
And brought me food. Have I not cause  
to love her?

Mar. Yes.

Her. More than ever Parent  
loved a Child? 849

Mar. Yes, yes.

Her. I will not murmur, merciful God!  
I will not murmur; blasted as I have been,  
Thou hast left me ears to hear my Daughter's voice,

And arms to hold her to my heart. Sub-  
missively 853

Thee I adore, and find my rest in faith.

Enter OSWALD.

Osw. Herbert!—confusion! (*aside*). Here  
it is, my Friend, [*Presents the Horn*].  
A charming beverage for you to carouse  
This bitter night.

Her. Ha! Oswald! ten bright crosses  
I would have given, not many minutes  
gone,

To have heard your voice.

Osw. Your couch, I fear, good Baron,  
Has been but comfortless; and yet that  
place, 860

When the tempestuous wind first drove  
us hither,

Felt warm as a wren's nest. You'd better  
turn

And under covert rest till break of day,  
Or till the storm abate.

(*To MARMADUKE aside.*) He has restored  
you,

No doubt you have been nobly enter-  
tained? 865

But soft!—how came he forth? The Night-  
mare Conscience

Has driven him out of harbour?

Mar. I believe  
You have guessed right.

Her. The trees renew their murmur:  
Come, let us house together.

[OSWALD conducts him to the dungeon.  
Osw. (*returns*). Had I not

Esteemed you worthy to conduct the af-  
fair 870

To its most fit conclusion, do you think

I would so long have struggled with my  
Nature,  
And smothered all that's man in me?—  
away!—

[*Looking towards the dungeon.*  
This man's the property of him who best  
Can feel his crimes. I have resigned a

privilege; 875

It now becomes my duty to resume it.

Mar. Touch not a finger—

Osw. What then must be done?

Mar. Which way so'er I turn, I am  
perplexed.

Osw. Now, on my life, I grieve for you.  
The misery

Of doubt is insupportable. Pity, the facts  
Did not admit of stronger evidence; 881  
Twelve honest men, plain men, would set  
us right;

Their verdict would abolish these weak  
scruples.

Mar. Weak! I am weak—there does  
my torment lie,

Feeding itself.

Osw. Verily, when he said 885  
How his old heart would leap to hear her  
steps,

You thought his voice the echo of Idonea's.

Mar. And never heard a sound so ter-  
rible.

Osw. Perchance you think so now?

Mar. I cannot do it:  
Twice did I spring to grasp his withered  
throat, 890  
When such a sudden weakness fell upon  
me,

I could have dropped asleep upon his  
breast.

Osw. Justice—is there not thunder in  
the word?

Shall it be law to stab the petty robber  
Who aims but at our purse; and shall  
this Parricide— 895

Worse is he far, far worse (if foul dis-  
honour

Be worse than death) to that confiding  
Creature

Whom he to more than filial love and duty  
Hath falsely trained—shall he fulfil his  
purpose?

But you are fallen.

*Mar.* Fallen should I be indeed— 900  
Murder—perhaps asleep, blind, old, alone,  
Betrayed, in darkness! Here to strike the  
blow—

Away! away!—[*Flings away his sword.*]

*Osw.* Nay, I have done with you:  
We'll lead him to the Convent. He shall  
live,

And she shall love him. With unquestion-  
ed title 905

He shall be seated in his Barony,  
And we too chant the praise of his good  
deeds.

I now perceive we do mistake our mas-  
ters,

And most despise the men who best can  
teach us:

Henceforth it shall be said that bad men  
only 910

Are brave: Clifford is brave; and that  
old Man

Is brave.

[*Taking MARMADUKE's sword and  
giving it to him.*]

To Clifford's arms he would have led  
His Victim—haply to this desolate house.

*Mar.* (*advancing to the dungeon.*) It  
must be ended!—

*Osw.* Softly; do not rouse him;  
He will deny it to the last. He lies 915  
Within the Vault, a spear's length to the  
left.

[*MARMADUKE descends to the dungeon.*  
(*Alone*). The Villains rose in mutiny to  
destroy me;

I could have quelled the Cowards, but this  
Stripling

Must needs step in, and save my life. The  
look

With which he gave the boon—I see it  
now! 920

The same that tempted me to loathe the  
gift.—

For this old venerable Grey-beard—faith  
'Tis his own fault if he hath got a face  
Which doth play tricks with them that  
look on it:

'Twas this that put it in my thoughts—  
that countenance— 925

His staff—his figure—Murder!—what, of  
whom?

We kill a worn-out horse, and who but  
women

Sigh at the deed? Hew down a withered  
tree,

And none look grave but dotards. He  
may live

To thank me for this service. Rainbow  
arches, 930

Highways of dreaming passion, have too  
long,

Young as he is, diverted wish and hope  
From the unpretending ground we mortals  
tread;—

Then shatter the delusion, break it up  
And set him free. What follows? I have  
learned 935

That things will work to ends the slaves  
o' the world

Do never dream of. *I have* been what he—  
This Boy—when he comes forth with  
bloody hands—

Might envy, and am now,—but he shall  
know

What I am now—

[*Goes and listens at the dungeon.*]

Praying or parleying?—tut! tut! 940

Is he not eyeless? He has been half-dead  
These fifteen years—

*Enter female Beggar with two or three of  
her Companions.*

(*Turning abruptly.*) Ha! speak—what  
Thing art thou?

(*Recognises her.*) Heavens! my good  
Friend! [To her. 945

*Beg.* Forgive me, gracious Sir!—  
*Osw.* (*to her companions.*) Begone, ye

Slaves, or I will raise a whirlwind  
And send ye dancing to the clouds, like  
leaves. [They retire affrighted. 950

*Beg.* Indeed we meant no harm; we  
lodge sometimes 945

In this deserted Castle—I repent me.

[*OSWALD goes to the dungeon—  
listens—returns to the Beggar.*]

*Osw.* Woman, thou hast a helpless In-  
fant—keep

Thy secret for its sake, or verily  
That wretched life of thine shall be the  
forfeit. 955

*Beg.* I do repent me, Sir; I fear the curse

Of that blind Man. 'Twas not your money, Sir.—

*Osw.* Begone!

*Beg. (going).* There is some wicked deed in hand: *Aside.*

Would I could find the old Man and his Daughter. *[Exit Beggar.]*

MARMADUKE re-enters from the dungeon.

*Osw.* It is all over then;—your foolish fears 955

Are hushed to sleep, by your own act and deed,

Made quiet as he is.

*Mar.* Why came you down? And when I felt your hand upon my arm And spake to you, why did you give no answer?

Fear'd you to waken him? he must have been 960

In a deep sleep. I whispered to him thrice. There are the strangest echoes in that place!

*Osw.* Tut! let them gabble till the day of doom.

*Mar.* Scarcely, by groping, had I reach'd the Spot,

When round my wrist I felt a cord drawn tight, 965

As if the blind Man's dog were pulling at it.

*Osw.* But after that?

*Mar.* The features of Idonea Lurked in his face—

*Osw.* Pshaw! Never to these eyes Will retribution show itself again. 969 With aspect so inviting. Why forbid me To share your triumph?

*Mar.* Yes, her very look, Smiling in sleep—

*Osw.* A pretty feat of Fancy!

*Mar.* Though but a glimpse, it sent me to my prayers.

*Osw.* Is he alive?

*Mar.* What mean you? who alive?

*Osw.* Herbert! since you will have it, Baron Herbert; 975

He who will gain his Seignory when Idonea

Hath become Clifford's harlot—is he living?

*Mar.* The old Man in that dungeon is alive.

*Osw.* Henceforth, then, will I never in camp or field

Obeys you more. Your weakness, to the Band, 980

Shall be proclaimed: brave Men, they all shall hear it.

You a protector of humanity!

Avenger you of outraged innocence!

*Mar.* 'Twas dark—dark as the grave; yet did I see,

Saw him—his face turned toward me; and I tell thee 985

Idonea's filial countenance was there

To baffle me—it put me to my prayers.

Upwards I cast my eyes, and, through a crevice,

Beheld a star twinkling above my head,

And, by the living God, I could not do it. *[Sinks exhausted.]*

*Osw. (to himself).* Now may I perish if this turn do more 991

Than make me change my course.

*(To MARMADUKE).* Dear Marmaduke,

My words were rashly spoken; I recall them:

I feel my error; shedding human blood

Is a most serious thing.

*Mar.* Not I alone, 995

Thou too art deep in guilt.

*Osw.* We have indeed Been most presumptuous. There is guilt in this,

Else could so strong a mind have ever known

These trepidations? Plain it is that Heaven

Has marked out this foul Wretch as one whose crimes 1000

Must never come before a mortal judgment-seat,

Or be chastised by mortal instruments.

*Mar.* A thought that's worth a thousand worlds!

*[Goes towards the dungeon.]*

*Osw.* I grieve

That, in my zeal, I have caused you so much pain.

*Mar.* Think not of that! 'tis over—we are safe. 1005

*Osw.* (*as if to himself, yet speaking aloud*).  
The truth is hideous, but how stifle it?

[*Turning to MARMADUKE.*]

Give me your sword—nay, here are stones  
and fragments,

The least of which would beat out a man's  
brains;

Or you might drive your head against  
that wall. 1009

No! this is not the place to hear the tale:  
It should be told you pinioned in your  
bed,

Or on some vast and solitary plain  
Blown to you from a trumpet.

*Mar.* Why talk thus?

Whate'er the monster brooding in your  
breast

I care not: fear I have none, and cannot  
fear— 1015

[*The sound of a horn is heard.*]

That horn again—'Tis some one of our  
Troop;

What do they here? Listen!

*Osw.* What; dogged like thieves!

*Enter WALLACE and LACY, &c.*

*Lacy.* You are found at last, thanks to  
the vagrant Troop  
For not misleading us.

*Osw.* (*looking at WALLACE*). That subtle  
Grey-beard— 1019

I'd rather see my father's ghost.

*Lacy* (*to MARMADUKE*). My Captain,  
We come by order of the Band. Belike  
You have not heard that Henry has at last  
Dissolved the Barons' League, and sent  
abroad

His Sheriffs with fit force to reinstate  
The genuine owners of such Lands and  
Baronies 1025

As, in these long commotions, have been  
seized.

His Power is this way tending. It befits  
us

To stand upon our guard, and with our  
swords

Defend the innocent.

*Mar.* Lacy! we look 1029  
But at the surfaces of things; we hear  
Of towns in flames, fields ravaged, young  
and old

Driven out in troops to want and naked-  
ness;

Then grasp our swords and rush upon a  
cure

That flatters us, because it asks not  
thought:

The deeper malady is better hid; 1035  
The world is poisoned at the heart.

*Lacy.* What mean you?

*Wal.* (*whose eye has been fixed suspiciously upon OSWALD*). Ay, what is  
it you mean?

*Mar.* Harkee, my Friends;—  
[*Appearing gay.*]

Were there a Man who, being weak and  
helpless

And most forlorn, should bribe a Mother,  
pressed 1039

By penury, to yield him up her Daughter,  
A little Infant, and instruct the Babe,

Prattling upon his knee, to call him Fa-  
ther—

*Lacy.* Why, if his heart be tender, that  
offence

I could forgive him.

*Mar.* (*going on*). And should he make  
the Child

An instrument of falsehood, should he  
teach her 1045

To stretch her arms, and dim the glad-  
some light

Of infant playfulness with piteous looks

Of misery that was not—

*Lacy.* Troth, 'tis hard—

But in a world like ours—

*Mar.* (*changing his tone*). This self-  
same Man—

Even while he printed kisses on the cheek  
Of this poor Babe, and taught its innocent

tongue 1051

To lisp the name of Father—could he look  
To the unnatural harvest of that time

When he should give her up, a Woman  
grown, 1054

To him who bid the highest in the market  
Of foul pollution—

*Lacy.* The whole visible world  
Contains not such a Monster!

*Mar.* For this purpose  
Should he resolve to taint her Soul by  
means

Which bathe the limbs in sweat to think  
of them ;  
Should he, by tales which would draw  
tears from iron, 1060  
Work on her nature, and so turn com-  
passion  
And gratitude to ministers of vice,  
And make the spotless spirit of filial love  
Prime mover in a plot to damn his Victim  
Both soul and body—  
*Wal.* 'Tis too horrible ; 1065  
Oswald, what say you to it ?  
*Lacy.* Hew him down,  
And fling him to the ravens.  
*Mar.* But his aspect,  
It is so meek, his countenance so vene-  
rable.  
*Wal.* (with an appearance of mistrust).  
But how, what say you, Oswald ?  
*Lacy* (at the same moment). Stab him,  
were it  
Before the Altar.  
*Mar.* What, if he were sick, 1070  
Tottering upon the very verge of life,  
And old, and blind—  
*Lacy.* Blind, say you ?  
*Osw.* (coming forward). Are we Men,  
Or own we baby Spirits ? Genuine courage  
Is not an accidental quality,  
A thing dependent for its casual birth  
On opposition and impediment. 1076  
Wisdom, if Justice speak the word, beats  
down  
The giant's strength ; and, at the voice of  
Justice,  
Spare not the worm. The giant and the  
worm—  
She weighs them in one scale. The wiles  
of woman, 1080  
And craft of age, seducing reason, first  
Made weakness a protection, and obscured  
The moral shapes of things. His tender  
cries  
And helpless innocence—do they protect  
The infant lamb ? and shall the infirmi-  
ties, 1085  
Which have enabled this enormous Culprit  
To perpetrate his crimes, serve as a Sanc-  
tuary  
To cover him from punishment ? Shame !—  
Justice,

Admitting no resistance, bends alike  
The feeble and the strong. She needs not  
here 1090  
Her bonds and chains, which make the  
mighty feeble.  
—We recognise in this old Man a victim  
Prepared already for the sacrifice.  
*Lacy.* By heaven, his words are reason !  
*Osw.* Yes, my Friends,  
His countenance is meek and vene-  
rable ; 1095  
And, by the Mass, to see him at his  
prayers !—  
I am of flesh and blood, and may I perish  
When my heart does not ache to think  
of it !—  
Poor Victim ! not a virtue under heaven  
But what was made an engine to ensnare  
thee ; 1100  
But yet I trust, Idonea, thou art safe.  
*Lacy.* Idonea !  
*Wal.* How ! what ? your Idonea ?  
[To MARMADUKE.  
*Mar.* Mine ;  
But now no longer mine. You know  
Lord Clifford ;  
He is the Man to whom the Maiden—pure  
As beautiful, and gentle and benign, 1105  
And in her ample heart loving even me—  
Was to be yielded up.  
*Lacy.* Now, by the head  
Of my own child, this Man must die ; my  
hand,  
A worthier wanting, shall itself entwine  
In his grey hairs !—  
*Mar.* (to LACY). I love the Father in  
thee. 1110  
You know me, Friends ; I have a heart  
to feel,  
And I have felt, more than perhaps be-  
comes me  
Or duty sanctions.  
*Lacy.* We will have ample justice.  
Who are we, Friends ? Do we not live on  
ground  
Where Souls are self-defended, free to  
grow 1115  
Like mountain oaks rocked by the stormy  
wind.  
Mark the Almighty Wisdom, which de-  
creed

This monstrous crime to be laid open—  
here,

Where Reason has an eye that she can  
use,

And Men alone are Umpires. To the  
Camp 1120

He shall be led, and there, the Country  
round

All gathered to the spot, in open day  
Shall Nature be avenged.

Osw. 'Tis nobly thought;  
His death will be a monument for ages.

Mar. (to LACY). I thank you for that  
hint. He shall be brought 1125

Before the Camp, and would that best  
and wisest

Of every country might be present. There  
His crime shall be proclaimed; and for  
the rest

It shall be done as Wisdom shall decide:  
Meanwhile, do you two hasten back and  
see 1130

That all is well prepared.

Wal. We will obey you.  
(Aside). But softly! we must look a little  
nearer.

Mar. Tell where you found us. At  
some future time  
I will explain the cause. [Exeunt.

### ACT III.

SCENE, *The door of the Hostel, a group of  
Pilgrims as before; IDONEA and the  
Host among them.*

Host. Lady, you'll find your Father at  
the Convent 1135

As I have told you: He left us yesterday  
With two Companions; one of them, as  
seemed,

His most familiar Friend. (Going.) There  
was a letter

Of which I heard them speak, but that I  
fancy

Has been forgotten.

Idon. (to Host). Farewell!

Host. Gentle pilgrims,  
St. Cuthbert speed you on your holy  
errand. 1141

[Exeunt IDONEA and Pilgrims.]

SCENE, *A desolate Moor.*

OSWALD (alone).

Osw. Carry him to the Camp! Yes, to  
the Camp.

Oh, Wisdom! a most wise resolve! and  
then,

That half a word should blow it to the  
winds!

This last device must end my work.—  
Methinks 1145

It were a pleasant pastime to construct  
A scale and table of belief—as thus—

Two columns, one for passion, one for  
proof;

Each rises as the other falls: and first,  
Passion a unit and *against* us—proof—

Nay, we must travel in another path, 1151  
Or we're stuck fast for ever;—passion,  
then,

Shall be a unit *for* us; proof—no, passion!  
We'll not insult thy majesty by time,

Person, and place—the where, the when,  
the how, 1155

And all particulars that dull brains re-  
quire

To constitute the spiritless shape of Fact,  
They bow to, calling the idol, Demonstra-  
tion.

A whipping to the Moralists who preach  
That misery is a sacred thing: for me,

I know no cheaper engine to degrade a  
man, 1161

Nor any half so sure. This Stripling's  
mind

Is shaken till the dregs float on the sur-  
face;

And, in the storm and anguish of the  
heart,

He talks of a transition in his Soul, 1165  
And dreams that he is happy. We dis-  
sect

The senseless body, and why not the  
mind?—

These are strange sights—the mind of  
man, upturned,

Is in all natures a strange spectacle;  
In some a hideous one—hem! shall I  
stop? 1170

No.—Thoughts and feelings will sink  
deep, but then

They have no substance. Pass but a few minutes,  
And something shall be done which Memory  
May touch, whene'er her Vassals are at work.

*Enter MARMADUKE, from behind.*

*Osw. (turning to meet him).* But listen, for my peace—

*Mar.* Why, I believe you.  
*Osw.* But hear the proofs—

*Mar.* Ay, prove that when two peas  
Lie snugly in a pod, the pod must  
then 1177  
Be larger than the peas—prove this—  
'twere matter

Worthy the hearing. Fool was I to  
dream

It ever could be otherwise!

*Osw.* Last night, 1180  
When I returned with water from the  
brook,

I overheard the Villains—every word  
Like red-hot iron burnt into my heart.  
Said one, "It is agreed on. The blind  
Man

Shall feign a sudden illness, and the  
Girl, 1185

Who on her journey must proceed alone,  
Under pretence of violence, be seized.

She is," continued the detested Slave,  
"She is right willing—strange if she were  
not!—

They say Lord Clifford is a savage  
man; 1190

But, faith, to see him in his silken tunic,  
Fitting his low voice to the minstrel's  
harp,

There's witchery in't. I never knew a  
maid

That could withstand it. True," con-  
tinued he,

"When we arranged the affair, she wept  
a little 1195

(Not the less welcome to my Lord for  
that)

And said, 'My Father he will have  
it so.'"

*Mar.* I am your hearer.

*Osw.* This I caught, and more

That may not be retold to any ear.

The obstinate bolt of a small iron door  
Detained them near the gateway of the  
Castle. 1201

By a dim lantern's light I saw that  
wreaths

Of flowers were in their hands, as if de-  
signed

For festive decoration; and they said,  
With brutal laughter and most foul allu-  
sion, 1205

That they should share the banquet with  
their Lord

And his new Favorite.

*Mar.* Misery!—

*Osw.* I knew  
How you would be disturbed by this dire  
news,

And therefore chose this solitary Moor,  
Here to impart the tale, of which, last  
night, 1210

I strove to ease my mind, when our two  
Comrades,

Commissioned by the Band, burst in  
upon us.

*Mar.* Last night, when moved to lift  
the avenging steel,

I did believe all things were shadows—  
yea,

Living or dead all things were bodi-  
less, 1215

All but the mutual mockeries of body,  
Till that same star summoned me back  
again.

Now I could laugh till my ribs ached.  
Oh, Fool!

To let a creed, built in the heart of  
things,

Dissolve before a twinkling atom!—*Os-  
wald,* 1220

I could fetch lessons out of wiser schools  
Than you have entered, were it worth the  
pains.

Young as I am, I might go forth a  
teacher,

And you should see how deeply I could  
reason

Of love in all its shapes, beginnings,  
ends; 1225

Of moral qualities in their diverse as-  
pects;

Of actions, and their laws and tendencies.

*Osw.* You take it as it merits—

*Mar.* One a King,  
General or Cham, Sultan or Emperor,  
Strews twenty acres of good meadow-  
ground 1230

With carcasses, in lineament and shape  
And substance, nothing differing from his  
own,

But that they cannot stand up of them-  
selves;

Another sits i' th' sun, and by the hour  
Floats kingcups in the brook—a Hero one  
We call, and scorn the other as Time's  
spendthrift; 1236

But have they not a world of common  
ground

To occupy—both fools, or wise alike,  
Each in his way?

*Osw.* Troth, I begin to think so.

*Mar.* Now for the corner-stone of my  
philosophy: 1240

I would not give a denier for the man  
Who, on such provocation as this earth  
Yields, could not chuck his babe beneath  
the chin,

And send it with a flip to its grave.

*Osw.* Nay, you leave me behind.

*Mar.* That such a One,  
So pious in demeanour! in his look 1246  
So saintly and so pure!—Harkee, my  
Friend,

I'll plant myself before Lord Clifford's  
Castle,

A surly mastiff kennels at the gate,  
And he shall howl and I will laugh, a  
medley 1250

Most tunable.

*Osw.* In faith, a pleasant scheme;  
But take your sword along with you, for  
that

Might in such neighbourhood find seemly  
use.—

But first, how wash our hands of this old  
Man?

*Mar.* Oh yes, that mole, that viper in  
the path; 1255

Plague on my memory, him I had for-  
gotten.

*Osw.* You know we left him sitting—  
see him yonder.

*Mar.* Ha! ha!—

*Osw.* As 'twill be but a moment's  
work,  
I will stroll on; you follow when 'tis done.  
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE changes to another part of the Moor  
at a short distance—HERBERT is dis-  
covered seated on a stone.

*Her.* A sound of laughter, too!—'tis  
well—I feared 1260

The Stranger had some pitiable sorrow  
Pressing upon his solitary heart.

Hush!—'tis the feeble and earth-loving  
wind

That creeps along the bells of the crisp  
heather.

Alas! 'tis cold—I shiver in the sun-  
shine— 1265

What can this mean? There is a psalm  
that speaks

Of God's parental mercies—with Idonea  
I used to sing it.—Listen!—what foot is  
there?

*Enter MARMADUKE.*

*Mar.* (*aside—looking at HERBERT.*) And  
I have loved this Man! and she hath  
loved him!

And I loved her, and she loves the Lord  
Clifford! 1270

And there it ends;—if this be not enough  
To make mankind merry for evermore,  
Then plain it is as day that eyes were  
made

For a wise purpose—verily to weep with!  
[*Looking round.*]

A pretty prospect this, a masterpiece 1275  
Of Nature, finished with most curious  
skill!

(*To HERBERT.*) Good Baron, have you  
ever practised tillage?

Pray tell me what this land is worth by  
the acre.

*Her.* How glad I am to hear your voice!  
I know not 1279

Wherein I have offended you;—last night  
I found in you the kindest of Protectors;  
This morning, when I spoke of weariness,  
You from my shoulder took my scrip and  
threw it

About your own; but for these two hours  
 past  
 Once only have you spoken, when the  
 lark 1285  
 Whirled from among the fern beneath our  
 feet,  
 And I, no coward in my better days,  
 Was almost terrified.  
*Mar.* That's excellent!—  
 So you bethought you of the many ways  
 In which a man may come to his end,  
 whose crimes 1290  
 Have roused all Nature up against him—  
 pshaw!—  
*Her.* For mercy's sake, is nobody in  
 sight?  
 No traveller, peasant, herdsman?  
*Mar.* Not a soul:  
 Here is a tree, ragged, and bent, and  
 bare,  
 That turns its goat's-beard flakes of pea-  
 green moss 1295  
 From the stern breathing of the rough  
 sea-wind;  
 This have we, but no other company:  
 Commend me to the place. If a man  
 should die  
 And leave his body here, it were all one  
 As he were twenty fathoms underground.  
*Her.* Where is our common Friend?  
*Mar.* A ghost, methinks—  
 The Spirit of a murdered man, for in-  
 stance—  
 Might have fine room to ramble about  
 here,  
 A grand domain to squeak and gibber in.  
*Her.* Lost Man! if thou have any close-  
 pent guilt 1305  
 Pressing upon thy heart, and this the  
 hour  
 Of visitation—  
*Mar.* A bold word from you!  
*Her.* Restore him, Heaven!  
*Mar.* The desperate  
 Wretch!—A Flower,  
 Fairest of all flowers, was she once, but  
 now  
 They have snapped her from the stem—  
 Poh! let her lie 1310  
 Besoiled with mire, and let the houseless  
 snail

Feed on her leaves. You knew her well—  
 ay, there,  
 Old Man! you were a very Lynx, you  
 knew  
 The worm was in her—  
*Her.* Mercy! Sir, what mean you?  
*Mar.* You have a Daughter!  
*Her.* Oh that she were here!—  
 She hath an eye that sinks into all  
 hearts, 1316  
 And if I have in aught offended you,  
 Soon would her gentle voice make peace  
 between us.  
*Mar.* (*aside*). I do believe he weeps—  
 I could weep too—  
 There is a vein of her voice that runs  
 through his: 1320  
 Even such a Man my fancy bodied forth  
 From the first moment that I loved the  
 Maid;  
 And for his sake I loved her more: these  
 tears—  
 I did not think that aught was left in me  
 Of what I have been—yes, I thank thee,  
 Heaven! 1325  
 One happy thought has passed across my  
 mind.  
 —It may not be—I am cut off from man;  
 No more shall I be man—no more shall I  
 Have human feelings!—(*To HERBERT*)—  
 Now, for a little more  
 About your Daughter!  
*Her.* Troops of armed men,  
 Met in the roads, would bless us; little  
 children, 1331  
 Rushing along in the full tide of play,  
 Stood silent as we passed them! I have  
 heard  
 The boisterous carman, in the miry road,  
 Check his loud whip and hail us with  
 mild voice, 1335  
 And speak with milder voice to his poor  
 beasts.  
*Mar.* And whither were you going?  
*Her.* Learn, young Man,—  
 To fear the virtuous, and reverence misery,  
 Whether too much for patience, or, like  
 mine,  
 Softened till it becomes a gift of mercy.  
*Mar.* Now, this is as it should be!  
*Her.* I am weak!— 1341

My Daughter does not know how weak  
 I am;  
 And, as thou see'st, under the arch of  
 heaven  
 Here do I stand, alone, to helplessness,  
 By the good God, our common Father,  
 doomed!— 1345  
 But I had once a spirit and an arm—  
*Mar.* Now, for a word about your  
 Barony:  
 I fancy when you left the Holy Land,  
 And came to—what's your title—eh?  
 your claims  
 Were undisputed!  
*Her.* Like a mendicant, 1350  
 Whom no one comes to meet, I stood  
 alone;—  
 I murmured—but, remembering Him who  
 fed  
 The pelican and ostrich of the desert,  
 From my own threshold I looked up to  
 Heaven  
 And did not want glimmerings of quiet  
 hope. 1355  
 So from the court I passed, and down the  
 brook,  
 Led by its murmur, to the ancient oak  
 I came; and when I felt its cooling shade,  
 I sate me down, and cannot but believe—  
 While in my lap I held my little Babe  
 And clasped her to my heart, my heart  
 that ached 1361  
 More with delight than grief—I heard a  
 voice  
 Such as by Cherith on Elijah called;  
 It said, "I will be with thee." A little  
 boy,  
 A shepherd-lad, ere yet my trance was  
 gone, 1365  
 Hailed us as if he had been sent from  
 heaven,  
 And said, with tears, that he would be  
 our guide:  
 I had a better guide—that innocent  
 Babe—  
 Her, who hath saved me, to this hour,  
 from harm,  
 From cold, from hunger, penury, and  
 death; 1370  
 To whom I owe the best of all the  
 good

I have, or wish for, upon earth—and more  
 And higher far than lies within earth's  
 bounds:  
 Therefore I bless her: when I think of  
 Man,  
 I bless her with sad spirit,—when of  
 God, 1375  
 I bless her in the fulness of my joy!  
*Mar.* The name of daughter in his  
 mouth, he prays!  
 With nerves so steady, that the very flies  
 Sit unmolested on his staff.—Innocent!  
 If he were innocent—then he would  
 tremble 1380  
 And be disturbed, as I am. (*Turning  
 aside*). I have read  
 In Story, what men now alive have wit-  
 nessed,  
 How, when the People's mind was racked  
 with doubt,  
 Appeal was made to the great Judge: the  
 Accused  
 With naked feet walked over burning  
 ploughshares. 1385  
 Here is a Man by Nature's hand prepared  
 For a like trial, but more merciful.  
 Why else have I been led to this bleak  
 Waste?  
 Bare is it, without house or track, and  
 destitute  
 Of obvious shelter, as a shipless sea. 1390  
 Here will I leave him—here—All-seeing  
 God!  
 Such as *he* is, and sore perplexed as I am,  
 I will commit him to this final *Ordeal*!—  
 He heard a voice—a shepherd-lad came to  
 him  
 And was his guide; if once, why not  
 again, 1395  
 And in this desert? If never—then the  
 whole  
 Of what he says, and looks, and does,  
 and is,  
 Makes up one damning falsehood. Leave  
 him here  
 To cold and hunger!—Pain is of the  
 heart,  
 And what are a few throes of bodily  
 suffering 1400  
 If they can waken one pang of remorse?  
 [*Goes up to HERBERT.*]

Old Man! my wrath is as a flame burnt out,  
It cannot be rekindled. Thou art here  
Led by my hand to save thee from per-  
dition;  
Thou wilt have time to breathe and  
think—

*Her.* Oh, Mercy!

*Mar.* I know the need that all men  
have of mercy, 1406  
And therefore leave thee to a righteous  
judgment.

*Her.* My Child, my blessed Child!

*Mar.* No more of that;  
Thou wilt have many guides if thou art  
innocent;

Yea, from the utmost corners of the  
earth, 1410  
That Woman will come o'er this Waste  
to save thee.

[*He pauses and looks at HERBERT's staff.*  
Ha! what is here? and carved by her  
own hand! [*Reads upon the staff.*  
"I am eyes to the blind, saith the Lord.  
He that puts his trust in me shall not  
fail!"

Yes, be it so;—repent and be forgiven—  
God and that staff are now thy only  
guides. 1416

[*He leaves HERBERT on the Moor.*

SCENE, *An eminence, a Beacon on the  
summit.*

LACY, WALLACE, LENNOX, &c. &c.

*Several of the Band (confusedly).* But  
patience!

*One of the Band.* Curses on that Traitor,  
Oswald!—

Our Captain made a prey to foul device!—

*Len. (to WALLACE).* His tool, the wander-  
ing Beggar, made last night

A plain confession, such as leaves no  
doubt, 1420

Knowing what otherwise we know too  
well,

That she revealed the truth. Stand by  
me now;

For rather would I have a nest of vipers  
Between my breast-plate and my skin  
than make

Oswald my special enemy, if you 1425

Deny me your support.

*Lacy.* We have been fooled—  
But for the motive?

*Wal.* Natures such as his  
Spin motives out of their own bowels,  
*Lacy!*

I learn'd this when I was a Confessor.

I know him well; there needs no other  
motive 1430

Than that most strange incontinence in  
crime

Which haunts this Oswald. Power is life  
to him

And breath and being; where he cannot  
govern,

He will destroy.

*Lacy.* To have been trapped like  
moles!—

Yes, you are right, we need not hunt for  
motives: 1435

There is no crime from which this man  
would shrink;

He recks not human law; and I have  
noticed

That often, when the name of God is  
uttered,

A sudden blankness overspreads his face.

*Len.* Yet, reasoner as he is, his pride  
has built 1440

Some uncouth superstition of its own.

*Wal.* I have seen traces of it.

*Len.* Once he headed  
A band of Pirates in the Norway seas;

And when the King of Denmark sum-  
moned him

To the oath of fealty, I well remember,  
'Twas a strange answer that he made; he

said, 1446  
"I hold of Spirits, and the Sun in hea-  
ven."

*Lacy.* He is no madman.

*Wal.* A most subtle doctor  
Were that man, who could draw the line

that parts  
Pride and her daughter, Cruelty, from

Madness, 1450  
That should be scourged, not pitied.

Restless Minds,  
Such Minds as find amid their fellow-men

No heart that loves them, none that they  
can love,

Will turn perforce and seek for sympathy  
In dim relation to imagined Beings. 1455

*One of the Band.* What if he mean to  
offer up our Captain

An expiation and a sacrifice  
To those infernal fiends!

*Wal.* Now, if the event  
Should be as Lennox has foretold, then  
swear,

My Friends, his heart shall have as many  
wounds 1460

As there are daggers here.

*Lacy.* What need of swearing!

*One of the Band.* Let us away!

*Another.* Away!

*A third.* Hark! how the horns  
Of those Scotch Rovers echo through the  
vale.

*Lacy.* Stay you behind; and, when  
the sun is down,  
Light up this beacon.

*One of the Band.* You shall be obeyed.  
[*They go out together.*]

SCENE, *The Wood on the edge of the Moor.*

MARMADUKE (*alone*).

*Mar.* Deep, deep and vast, vast be-  
yond human thought,  
Yet calm.—I could believe that there  
was here

The only quiet heart on earth. In terror,  
Remembered terror, there is peace and  
rest. 1469

*Enter OSWALD.*

*Osw.* Ha! my dear Captain.

*Mar.* A later meeting, Oswald,  
Would have been better timed.

*Osw.* Alone, I see;  
You have done your duty. I had hopes,  
which now  
I feel that you will justify.

*Mar.* I had fears,  
From which I have freed myself—but 'tis  
my wish

To be alone, and therefore we must part.

*Osw.* Nay, then — I am mistaken.  
There's a weakness 1476

About you still; you talk of solitude—  
I am your friend.

*Mar.* What need of this assurance

At any time? and why given now?

*Osw.*

Because

You are now in truth my Master; you  
have taught me 1480

What there is not another living man  
Had strength to teach;—and therefore  
gratitude

Is bold, and would relieve itself by praise.  
*Mar.* Wherefore press this on me?

*Osw.*

Because I feel

That you have shown, and by a signal  
instance, 1485

How they who would be just must seek  
the rule

By diving for it into their own bosoms.  
To-day you have thrown off a tyranny  
That lives but in the torpid acquiescence  
Of our emasculated souls, the tyranny  
Of the world's masters, with the musty  
rules 1491

By which they uphold their craft from  
age to age:

You have obeyed the only law that sense  
Submits to recognise; the immediate law,  
From the clear light of circumstances,  
flashed 1495

Upon an independent Intellect.

Henceforth new prospects open on your  
path;

Your faculties should grow with the  
demand;

I still will be your friend, will cleave to  
you

Through good and evil, obloquy and  
scorn, 1500

Oft as they dare to follow on your steps.

*Mar.* I would be left alone.

*Osw. (exultingly).* I know your motives!  
I am not of the world's presumptuous  
judges,

Who damn where they can neither see  
nor feel,

With a hard-hearted ignorance; your  
struggles 1505

I witness'd, and now hail your victory.

*Mar.* Spare me awhile that greeting.

*Osw.*

It may be

That some •there are, squeamish half-  
thinking cowards,

Who will turn pale upon you, call you  
murderer,

And you will walk in solitude among  
them. 1510

A mighty evil for a strong-built mind !—  
Join twenty tapers of unequal height  
And light them joined, and you will see  
the less

How 'twill burn down the taller; and  
they all 1514

Shall prey upon the tallest. Solitude !—  
The Eagle lives in Solitude !

*Mar.* Even so,  
The Sparrow so on the house-top, and I,  
The weakest of God's creatures, stand  
resolved

To abide the issue of my act, alone.

*Osw.* Now would you? and for ever?—  
My young Friend, 1520

As time advances either we become  
The prey or masters of our own past  
deeds.

Fellowship we *must* have, willing or no ;  
And if good Angels fail, slack in their  
duty,

Substitutes, turn our faces where we may,  
Are still forthcoming; some which, though  
they bear 1526

Ill names, can render no ill services,  
In recompense for what themselves re-  
quired.

So meet extremes in this mysterious  
world,

And opposites thus melt into each other.

*Mar.* Time, since Man first drew breath,  
has never moved 1531

With such a weight upon his wings as  
now;

But they will soon be lightened.

*Osw.* Ay, look up—  
Cast round you your mind's eye, and you  
will learn

Fortitude is the child of Enterprise : 1535  
Great actions move our admiration, chiefly  
Because they carry in themselves an  
earnest

That we can suffer greatly.

*Mar.* Very true.

*Osw.* Action is transitory—a step, a  
blow,

The motion of a muscle—this way or  
that— 1540

'Tis done, and in the after-vacancy

We wonder at ourselves like men be-  
trayed :

Suffering is permanent, obscure and dark,  
And shares the nature of infinity.

*Mar.* Truth—and I feel it.

*Osw.* What ! if you had bid

Eternal farewell to unmingled joy 1546

And the light dancing of the thoughtless  
heart;

It is the toy of fools, and little fit  
For such a world as this. The wise ab-  
jure

All thoughts whose idle composition lives  
In the entire forgetfulness of pain. 1551

—I see I have disturbed you.

*Mar.* By no means.

*Osw.* Compassion !—pity !—pride can  
do without them;

And what if you should never know them  
more !—

He is a puny soul who, feeling pain, 1555  
Finds ease because another feels it too.

If e'er I open out this heart of mine  
It shall be for a nobler end—to teach  
And not to purchase puling sympathy.

—Nay, you are pale.

*Mar.* It may be so.

*Osw.* Remorse—

It cannot live with thought; think on,  
think on, 1561

And it will die. What ! in this universe,  
Where the least things control the great-  
est, where

The faintest breath that breathes can  
move a world ;

What ! feel remorse, where, if a cat had  
sneezed, 1565

A leaf had fallen, the thing had never  
been

Whose very shadow gnaws us to the  
vitals.

*Mar.* Now, whither are you wandering?

That a man,

So used to suit his language to the time,  
Should thus so widely differ from him-  
self— 1576

It is most strange.

*Osw.* Murder !—what's in the word !—

I have no cases by me ready made

To fit all deeds. Carry him to the Camp !—

A shallow project;—you of late have seen

More deeply, taught us that the institutes 1575

Of Nature, by a cunning usurpation  
Banished from human intercourse, exist  
Only in our relations to the brutes  
That make the fields their dwelling. If a  
snake

Crawl from beneath our feet we do not ask  
A license to destroy him: our good govern-  
ors 1581

Hedge in the life of every pest and plague  
That bears the shape of man; and for  
what purpose,

But to protect themselves from extirpa-  
tion?—

This flimsy barrier you have overleaped.

*Mar.* My Office is fulfilled—the Man is  
now 1586

Delivered to the Judge of all things.

*Osw.* Dead!

*Mar.* I have borne my burthen to its  
destined end.

*Osw.* This instant we'll return to our  
Companions—

Oh how I long to see their faces again!

*Enter IDONEA with Pilgrims who continue  
their journey.*

*Idon.* (after some time). What, Marma-  
duke! now thou art mine for ever.

And Oswald, too! (*To MARMADUKE.*) On  
will we to my Father 1592

With the glad tidings which this day  
hath brought;

We'll go together, and, such proof received  
Of his own rights restored, his gratitude  
To God above will make him feel for ours.

*Osw.* I interrupt you?

*Idon.* Think not so.

*Mar.* *Idonea,*  
That I should ever live to see this mo-  
ment!

*Idon.* Forgive me.—Oswald knows it  
all—he knows,

Each word of that unhappy letter fell 1600  
As a blood-drop from my heart.

*Osw.* 'Twas even so.

*Mar.* I have much to say, but for  
whose ear?—not thine.

*Idon.* Ill can I bear that look—Plead  
for me, Oswald!

You are my Father's Friend.

(*To MARMADUKE.*) Alas, you know not,  
And never can you know, how much he  
loved me. 1605

Twice had he been to me a father, twice  
Had given me breath, and was I not to be  
His daughter, once his daughter? could I  
withstand

His pleading face, and feel his clasp-  
ing arms,

And hear his prayer that I would not for-  
sake him 1610

In his old age— [*Hides her face.*]

*Mar.* Patience—Heaven grant  
me patience!—

She weeps, she weeps—my brain shall  
burn for hours

Ere I can shed a tear.

*Idon.* I was a woman;  
And, balancing the hopes that are the  
dearest

To womankind with duty to my Father,  
I yielded up those precious hopes, which  
nought 1616

On earth could else have wrested from  
me;—if erring,

Oh let me be forgiven!

*Mar.* I do forgive thee.

*Idon.* But take me to your arms—this  
breast, alas!

It throbs, and you have a heart that does  
not feel it. 1620

*Mar.* (exultingly). She is innocent.

[*He embraces her.*]

*Osw.* (aside). Were I a Moral-  
ist, I should make wondrous revolution here;  
It were a quaint experiment to show

The beauty of truth— [*Addressing them.*]  
I see I interrupt you;

I shall have business with you, Marma-  
duke; 1625

Follow me to the Hostel. [*Exit OSWALD.*]

*Idon.* Marmaduke,

This is a happy day. My Father soon  
Shall sun himself before his native doors;  
The lame, the hungry, will be welcome  
there.

No more shall he complain of wasted  
strength, 1630

Of thoughts that fail, and a decaying  
heart;

His good works will be balm and life to him.

*Mar.* This is most strange!—I know not what it was,  
But there was something which most plainly said 1634

That thou wert innocent.

*Idon.* How innocent!—  
Oh heavens! you've been deceived.

*Mar.* Thou art a Woman  
To bring perdition on the universe.

*Idon.* Already I've been punished to the height

Of my offence. [*Smiling affectionately.*  
I see you love me still,

The labours of my hand are still your joy;  
Bethink you of the hour when on your shoulder 1641

I hung this belt.

[*Pointing to the belt on which was suspended HERBERT's scrip.*

*Mar.* Mercy of Heaven! [*Sinks.*

*Idon.* What ails you! [*Distractedly.*

*Mar.* The scrip that held his food, and I forgot

To give it back again!

*Idon.* What mean your words?

*Mar.* I know not what I said—all may be well. 1645

*Idon.* That smile hath life in it!

*Mar.* This road is perilous;  
I will attend you to a Hut that stands  
Near the wood's edge—rest there to-night,  
I pray you:

For me, I have business, as you heard,  
with Oswald, 1649

But will return to you by break of day.

[*Exeunt.*

#### ACT IV.

SCENE, *A desolate prospect—a ridge of rocks—a Chapel on the summit of one—Moon behind the rocks—night stormy—irregular sound of a bell—HERBERT enters exhausted.*

*Her.* That Chapel-bell in mercy seemed to guide me,

But now it mocks my steps; its fitful stroke

Can scarcely be the work of human hands.  
Hear me, ye Men upon the cliffs, if such

There be who pray nightly before the Altar. 1655

Oh that I had but strength to reach the place!

My Child—my Child—dark—dark—I faint—this wind—

These stifling blasts—God help me!

*Enter ELDBRED.*

*Eld.* Better this bare rock,  
Though it were tottering over a man's head,

Than a tight case of dungeon walls for shelter 1660

From such rough dealing.

[*A moaning voice is heard.*

Ha! what sound is that?

Trees creaking in the wind (but none are here)

Send forth such noises—and that weary bell!

Surely some evil Spirit abroad to-night  
Is ringing it—'twould stop a Saint in prayer, 1665

And that—what is it? never was sound so like

A human groan. Ha! what is here? Poor Man—

Murdered! alas! speak—speak, I am your friend:

No answer—hush—lost wretch, he lifts his hand

And lays it to his heart—(*Kneels to him*).  
I pray you speak! 1670

What has befallen you?

*Her. (feebly).* A stranger has done this,  
And in the arms of a stranger I must die.

*Eld.* Nay, think not so: come, let me raise you up: [*Raises him.*

This is a dismal place—well—that is well— 1674

I was too fearful—take me for your guide  
And your support—my hut is not far off.

[*Draws him gently off the stage.*

SCENE, *A room in the Hostel—MARMADUKE and OSWALD.*

*Mar.* But for Idonea!—I have cause to think

That she is innocent.

*Osw.* Leave that thought awhile

As one of those beliefs which in their  
 hearts  
 Lovers lock up as pearls, though oft no  
 better 1680  
 Than feathers clinging to their points of  
 passion.  
 This day's event has laid on me the duty  
 Of opening out my story; you must hear  
 it,  
 And without further preface.—In my  
 youth,  
 Except for that abatement which is paid  
 By envy as a tribute to desert, 1686  
 I was the pleasure of all hearts, the dar-  
 ling  
 Of every tongue—as you are now. You've  
 heard  
 That I embarked for Syria. On our  
 voyage  
 Was hatched among the crew a foul Con-  
 spiracy 1690  
 Against my honour, in the which our  
 Captain  
 Was, I believed, prime Agent. The wind  
 fell;  
 We lay becalmed week after week, until  
 The water of the vessel was exhausted;  
 I felt a double fever in my veins, 1695  
 Yet rage suppressed itself;—to a deep  
 stillness  
 Did my pride tame my pride;—for many  
 days,  
 On a dead sea under a burning sky,  
 I brooded o'er my injuries, deserted  
 By man and nature;—if a breeze had  
 blown, 1700  
 It might have found its way into my  
 heart,  
 And I had been—no matter—do you  
 mark me?  
*Mar.* Quick—to the point—if any un-  
 told crime  
 Doth haunt your memory,  
*Osw.* Patience, hear me further!—  
 One day in silence did we drift at  
 noon 1705  
 By a bare rock, narrow, and white, and  
 bare;  
 No food was there, no drink, no grass, no  
 shade,  
 No tree, nor jutting eminence, nor form

Inanimate large as the body of man,  
 Nor any living thing whose lot of life 1710  
 Might stretch beyond the measure of one  
 moon.  
 To dig for water on the spot, the Cap-  
 tain  
 Landed with a small troop, myself being  
 one:  
 There I reproached him with his trea-  
 chery.  
 Imperious at all times, his temper rose;  
 He struck me; and that instant had I  
 killed him, 1716  
 And put an end to his insolence, but my  
 Comrades  
 Rushed in between us: then did I insist  
 (All hated him, and I was stung to mad-  
 ness)  
 That we should leave him there, alive!—  
 we did so. 1720  
*Mar.* And he was famished?  
*Osw.* Naked was the spot;  
 Methinks I see it now—how in the sun  
 Its stony surface glittered like a shield;  
 And in that miserable place we left him,  
 Alone but for a swarm of minute crea-  
 tures 1725  
 Not one of which could help him while  
 alive,  
 Or mourn him dead.  
*Mar.* A man by men cast off,  
 Left without burial! nay, not dead nor  
 dying,  
 But standing, walking, stretching forth  
 his arms,  
 In all things like ourselves but in the  
 agony 1730  
 With which he called for mercy; and—  
 even so—  
 He was forsaken?  
*Osw.* There is a power in sounds:  
 The cries he uttered might have stopped  
 the boat  
 That bore us through the water—  
*Mar.* You returned  
 Upon that dismal hearing—did you not?  
*Osw.* Some scoffed at him with hellish  
 mockery. 1736  
 And laughed so loud it seemed that the  
 smooth sea  
 Did from some distant region echo us.

*Mar.* We all are of one blood, our veins  
are filled

At the same poisonous fountain !

*Osw.* 'Twas an island  
Only by sufferance of the winds and  
waves, 1741

Which with their foam could cover it at  
will.

I know not how he perished ; but the  
calm,

The same dead calm, continued many  
days.

*Mar.* But his own crime had brought  
on him this doom, 1745

His wickedness prepared it ; these expe-  
dients

Are terrible, yet ours is not the fault.

*Osw.* The man was famished, and was  
innocent !

*Mar.* Impossible !

*Osw.* The man had never wronged me.

*Mar.* Banish the thought, crush it, and  
be at peace. 1750

His guilt was marked—these things could  
never be

Were there not eyes that see, and for  
good ends,

Where ours are baffled.

*Osw.* I had been deceived.  
*Mar.* And from that hour the miser-  
able man 1754

No more was heard of ?

*Osw.* I had been betrayed.  
*Mar.* And he found no deliverance !

*Osw.* The Crew  
Gave me a hearty welcome ; they had laid

The plot to rid themselves, at any cost,  
Of a tyrannic Master whom they loathed.

So we pursued our voyage : when we  
landed, 1760

The tale was spread abroad ; my power  
at once

Shrunk from me ; plans and schemes, and  
lofty hopes—

All vanished. I gave way—do you attend ?  
*Mar.* The Crew deceived you ?

*Osw.* Nay, command yourself.  
*Mar.* It is a dismal night—how the  
wind howls ! 1765

*Osw.* I hid my head within a Convent,  
there

Lay passive as a dormouse in mid winter.  
That was no life for me—I was o'er-  
thrown,

But not destroyed.

*Mar.* The proofs—you ought  
to have seen

The guilt—have touched it—felt it at  
your heart— 1770

As I have done.

*Osw.* A fresh tide of Crusaders  
Drove by the place of my retreat : three  
nights

Did constant meditation dry my blood ;  
Three sleepless nights I passed in sound-  
ing on,

Through words and things, a dim and  
perilous way ; 1775

And, wheresoe'er I turned me, I beheld  
A slavery compared to which the dungeon

And clanking chains are perfect liberty.  
You understand me—I was comforted ;

I saw that every possible shape of ac-  
tion 1780

Might lead to good—I saw it and burst  
forth,

Thirsting for some of those exploits that  
fill

The earth for sure redemption of lost  
peace.

[Marking MARMADUKE'S countenance.

Nay, you have had the worst. Ferocity  
Subsided in a moment, like a wind 1785

That drops down dead out of a sky it  
vexed.

And yet I had within me evermore  
A salient spring of energy ; I mounted

From action up to action with a mind  
That never rested—without meat or

drink 1790

Have I lived many days—my sleep was  
bound

To purposes of reason—not a dream  
But had a continuity and substance

That waking life had never power to  
give.

*Mar.* O wretched Human-kind !—Until  
the mystery 1795

Of all this world is solved, well may we  
envy

The worm, that, underneath a stone whose  
weight

Would crush the lion's paw with mortal  
anguish,  
Doth lodge, and feed, and coil, and sleep,  
in safety.

Fell not the wrath of Heaven upon those  
traitors? 1800

*Osw.* Give not to them a thought. From  
Palestine

We marched to Syria: oft I left the  
Camp,

When all that multitude of hearts was  
still,

And followed on, through woods of gloomy  
cedar,

Into deep chasms troubled by roaring  
streams; 1805

Or from the top of Lebanon surveyed  
The moonlight desert, and the moonlight  
sea:

In these my lonely wanderings I per-  
ceived

What mighty objects do impress their  
forms

To elevate our intellectual being; 1810  
And felt, if ought on earth deserves a

curse,  
'Tis that worst principle of ill which  
dooms

A thing so great to perish self-consumed.  
—So much for my remorse!

*Mar.* Unhappy Man!

*Osw.* When from these forms I turned  
to contemplate 1815

The World's opinions and her usages,  
I seemed a Being who had passed alone

Into a region of futurity,  
Whose natural element was freedom—

*Mar.* Stop—

I may not, cannot, follow thee.

*Osw.* You must. 1820

I had been nourished by the sickly food  
Of popular applause. I now perceived  
That we are praised, only as men in us  
Do recognise some image of themselves,  
An abject counterpart of what they are,  
Or the empty thing that they would wish  
to be. 1826

I felt that merit has no surer test  
Than obloquy; that, if we wish to serve  
The world in substance, not deceive by  
show,

We must become obnoxious to its hate,  
Or fear disguised in simulated scorn. 1831  
*Mar.* I pity, can forgive, you; but  
those wretches—

That monstrous perfidy!

*Osw.* Keep down your wrath.  
False Shame discarded, spurious Fame  
despised,

Twin sisters both of Ignorance, I found  
Life stretched before me smooth as some  
broad way 1836

Cleared for a monarch's progress. Priests  
might spin

Their veil, but not for me—'twas in fit  
place

Among its kindred cobwebs. I had been,  
And in that dream had left my native  
land, 1840

One of Love's simple bondsmen—the soft  
chain

Was off for ever; and the men, from  
whom

This liberation came, you would destroy:  
Join me in thanks for their blind services.

*Mar.* 'Tis a strange aching that, when  
we would curse 1845

And cannot.—You have betrayed me—I  
have done—

I am content—I know that he is guilt-  
less—

That both are guiltless, without spot or  
stain,

Mutually consecrated. Poor old Man!

And I had heart for this, because thou  
lovedst 1850

Her who from very infancy had been

Light to thy path, warmth to thy blood!—  
Together [Turning to OSWALD.]

We propped his steps, he leaned upon us  
both.

*Osw.* Ay, we are coupled by a chain of  
adamant;

Let us be fellow-labourers, then, to en-  
large 1855

Man's intellectual empire. We subsist

In slavery; all is slavery; we receive  
Laws, but we ask not whence those laws  
have come;

We need an inward sting to goad us on.

*Mar.* Have you betrayed me? Speak  
to that.

*Osw.* The mask, 1860  
Which for a season I have stooped to wear,  
Must be cast off.—Know then that I was urged,  
(For other impulse let it pass) was driven,  
To seek for sympathy, because I saw  
In you a mirror of my youthful self; 1865  
I would have made us equal once again,  
But that was a vain hope. You have struck home,  
With a few drops of blood cut short the business;  
Therein for ever you must yield to me.  
But what is done will save you from the blank 1870  
Of living without knowledge that you live:  
Now you are suffering—for the future day,  
'Tis his who will command it.—Think of my story—  
Herbert is innocent.

*Mur.* (in a faint voice, and doubtingly). You do but echo

My own wild words?

*Osw.* Young Man, the seed must lie  
Hid in the earth, or there can be no harvest; 1876  
'Tis Nature's law. What I have done in darkness

I will atone before the face of day.  
Herbert is innocent.

*Mar.* What fiend could prompt  
This action? Innocent!—oh breaking heart!— 1880  
Alive or dead, I'll find him. [*Exit.*]

*Osw.* Alive—perdition! [*Exit.*]

SCENE, *The inside of a poor Cottage.*

ELEANOR and IDONEA seated.

*Idon.* The storm beats hard—Mercy for poor or rich,  
Whose heads are shelterless in such a night!

*A Voice without.* Holla! to bed, good Folks, within!

*Elea.* O save us! 1884

*Idon.* What can this mean?

*Elea.* Alas, for my poor husband!—

We'll have a counting of our flocks to-morrow;  
The wolf keeps festival these stormy nights:

Be calm, sweet Lady, they are wassailers  
[*The voices die away in the distance.*]  
Returning from their Feast—my heart beats so—

A noise at midnight does so frighten me.  
*Idon.* Hush! [*Listening.*]

*Elea.* They are gone. On such a night my husband, 1891  
Dragged from his bed, was cast into a dungeon,

Where, hid from me, he counted many years,

A criminal in no one's eyes but theirs—  
Not even in theirs—whose brutal violence 1895

So dealt with him.

*Idon.* I have a noble Friend  
First among youths of knightly breeding,  
One

Who lives but to protect the weak or injured.

There again! [*Listening.*]

*Elea.* 'Tis my husband's foot.  
Good Eldred 1899

Has a kind heart; but his imprisonment  
Has made him fearful, and he'll never be  
The man he was.

*Idon.* I will retire;—good night!  
[*She goes within.*]

*Enter ELDRÉD (hides a bundle).*

*Eld.* Not yet in bed, Eleanor!—there are stains in that frock which must be washed out. 1905

*Elea.* What has befallen you?

*Eld.* I am belated, and you must know the cause—(*speaking low*) that is the blood of an unhappy Man.

*Elea.* Oh! we are undone for ever. 1910

*Eld.* Heaven forbid that I should lift my hand against any man. Eleanor, I have shed tears to-night, and it comforts me to think of it.

*Elea.* Where, where is he? 1915

*Eld.* I have done him no harm, but—it will be forgiven me; it would not have been so once.

*Elea.* You have not *buried* anything? You are no richer than when you left me?

*Eld.* Be at peace; I am innocent. 1921

*Elea.* Then God be thanked—

[*A short pause; she falls upon his neck.*]

*Eld.* To-night I met with an old Man lying stretched upon the ground—a sad spectacle: I raised him up with the hope that we might shelter and restore him.

*Elea.* (*as if ready to run*). Where is he? You were not able to bring him *all* the way with you; let us return, I can help you. 1930

[*ELDRED shakes his head.*]

*Eld.* He did not seem to wish for life: as I was struggling on, by the light of the moon I saw the stains of blood upon my clothes—he waved his hand, as if it were all useless; and I let him sink again to the ground. 1936

*Elea.* Oh that I had been by your side!

*Eld.* I tell you his hands and his body were cold—how could I disturb his last moments? he strove to turn from me as if he wished to settle into sleep. 1941

*Elea.* But, for the stains of blood—

*Eld.* He must have fallen, I fancy, for his head was cut; but I think his malady was cold and hunger. 1945

*Elea.* Oh, Eldred, I shall never be able to look up at this roof in storm or fair but I shall tremble.

*Eld.* Is it not enough that my ill stars have kept me abroad to-night till this hour? I come home, and this is my comfort! 1952

*Elea.* But did he say nothing which might have set you at ease?

*Eld.* I thought he grasped my hand while he was muttering something about his Child—his Daughter—(*starting as if he heard a noise*). What is that? 1958

*Elea.* Eldred, you are a father.

*Eld.* God knows what was in my heart, and will not curse my son for my sake.

*Elea.* But you prayed by him? you waited the hour of his release? 1964

*Eld.* The night was wasting fast; I have no friend; I am spited by the world—his wound terrified me—if I had

brought him along with me, and he had died in my arms!—I am sure I heard something breathing—and this chair! 1970

*Elea.* Oh, Eldred, you will die alone. You will have nobody to close your eyes—no hand to grasp your dying hand—I shall be in my grave. A curse will attend us all. 1975

*Eld.* Have you forgot your own troubles when I was in the dungeon?

*Elea.* And you left him alive?

*Eld.* Alive!—the damps of death were upon him—he could not have survived an hour. 1981

*Elea.* In the cold, cold night.

*Eld.* (*in a savage tone*). Ay, and his head was bare; I suppose you would have had me lend my bonnet to cover it.—You will never rest till I am brought to a felon's end. 1987

*Elea.* Is there nothing to be done? cannot we go to the Convent?

*Eld.* Ay, and say at once that I murdered him! 1991

*Elea.* Eldred, I know that ours is the only house upon the Waste; let us take heart; this Man may be rich; and could he be saved by our means, his gratitude may reward us. 1996

*Eld.* 'Tis all in vain.

*Elea.* But let us make the attempt. This old Man may have a wife, and he may have children—let us return to the spot; we may restore him, and his eyes may yet open upon those that love him. 2003

*Eld.* He will never open them more; even when he spoke to me, he kept them firmly sealed, as if he had been blind.

*Idon.* (*rushing out*). It is, it is, my Father—

*Eld.* We are betrayed!

[*Looking at IDONEA.*]

*Elea.* His Daughter!—God have mercy!

[*Turning to IDONEA.*]

*Idon.* (*sinking down*). Oh! lift me up and carry me to the place. 2010  
You are safe, the whole world shall not harm you.

*Elea.* This Lady is his Daughter.

*Eld.* (*moved*). I'll lead you to the spot.

*Idon. (springing up).* Alive! you heard him breathe? quick, quick—

[*Exeunt.*]

# ACT V.

SCENE, *A Wood on the edge of the Waste.*

*Enter OSWALD and a Forester.*

*For.* He leaned upon the bridge that spans the glen, 2015  
And down into the bottom cast his eye,  
That fastened there, as it would check the current.

*Osw.* He listened too; did you not say he listened?

*For.* As if there came such moaning from the flood 2019  
As is heard often after stormy nights.

*Osw.* But did he utter nothing?

*For.* See him there!

*MARMADUKE appearing.*

*Mar.* Buzz, buzz, ye black and winged freebooters;

That is no substance which ye settle on!

*For.* His senses play him false; and see, his arms

Outspread, as if to save himself from falling!— 2025

Some terrible phantom I believe is now Passing before him, such as God will not

Permit to visit any but a man 2028  
Who has been guilty of some horrid crime.

[*MARMADUKE disappears.*]

*Osw.* The game is up!—

*For.* If it be needful, Sir, 2030  
I will assist you to lay hands upon him.

*Osw.* No, no, my Friend, you may pursue your business—

'Tis a poor wretch of an unsettled mind,  
Who has a trick of straying from his keepers;

We must be gentle. Leave him to my care. [*Exit. Forester.*]

If his own eyes play false with him, these freaks 2036

Of fancy shall be quickly tamed by mine;  
The goal is reached. My Master shall become

A shadow of myself—made by myself.

SCENE, *The edge of the Moor.*

*MARMADUKE and ELDRED enter from opposite sides.*

*Mar. (raising his eyes and perceiving ELDRED).* In any corner of this savage Waste 2040  
Have you, good Peasant, seen a blind old Man?

*Eld.* I heard—

*Mar.* You heard him, where? when heard him?

*Eld.* As you know,  
The first hours of last night were rough with storm:

I had been out in search of a stray heifer;  
Returning late, I heard a moaning sound;  
Then, thinking that my fancy had deceived me, 2046

I hurried on, when straight a second moan,  
A human voice distinct, struck on my ear.  
So guided, distant a few steps, I found  
An aged Man, and such as you describe.

*Mar.* You heard!—he called you to him? Of all men 2051  
The best and kindest!—but where is he? guide me,

That I may see him.

*Eld.* On a ridge of rocks  
A lonesome Chapel stands, deserted now:  
The bell is left, which no one dares remove; 2055

And, when the stormy wind blows o'er the peak,

It rings, as if a human hand were there  
To pull the cord. I guess he must have heard it;

And it had led him towards the precipice,  
To climb up to the spot whence the sound came; 2060

But he had failed through weakness. From his hand

His staff had dropped, and close upon the brink

Of a small pool of water he was laid,  
As if he had stooped to drink, and so remained 2064

Without the strength to rise.

*Mar.* Well, well, he lives,  
And all is safe: what said he?

*Eld.*

But few words:  
D 3

He only spake to me of a dear Daughter,  
Who, so he feared, would never see him  
more;

And of a Stranger to him, One by whom  
He had been sore misused; but he forgave  
The wrong and the wrong-doer. You are  
troubled— 2071

Perhaps you are his son?

Mar. The All-seeing knows,  
I did not think he had a living Child.—  
But whither did you carry him?

Eld. He was torn,  
His head was bruised, and there was blood  
about him— 2075

Mar. That was no work of mine.

Eld. Nor was it mine.

Mar. But had he strength to walk? I  
could have borne him

A thousand miles.

Eld. I am in poverty,  
And know how busy are the tongues of  
men;

My heart was willing, Sir, but I am one  
Whose good deeds will not stand by their  
own light; 2081

And, though it smote me more than words  
can tell,

I left him.

Mar. I believe that there are phantoms,  
That in the shape of man do cross our path  
On evil instigation, to make sport 2085  
Of our distress—and thou art one of them!  
But things substantial have so pressed on  
me—

Eld. My wife and children came into  
my mind.

Mar. Oh Monster! Monster! there are  
three of us,  
And we shall howl together.

[After a pause and in a feeble voice.

I am deserted

At my worst need, my crimes have in a  
net 2091

(Pointing to ELDRÉD) Entangled this poor  
man? Where was it? where?

[Dragging him along.

Eld. 'Tis needless; spare your violence.  
His Daughter—

Mar. Ay, in the word a thousand scor-  
pions lodge:

This old man had a Daughter.

Eld. To the spot 2095  
I hurried back with her.—Oh save me, Sir,  
From such a journey!—there was a  
black tree,

A single tree; she thought it was her  
Father.—

Oh Sir, I would not see that hour again  
For twenty lives. The daylight dawned,  
and now— 2100

Nay; hear my tale, 'tis fit that you should  
hear it—

As we approached, a solitary crow  
Rose from the spot;—the Daughter clapped  
her hands,

And then I heard a shriek so terrible

[MARMADUKE shrinks back.  
The startled bird quivered upon the wing.

Mar. Dead, dead!—

Eld. (after a pause). A dismal matter,  
Sir, for me, 2106

And seems the like for you; if 'tis your  
wish,

I'll lead you to his Daughter; but 'twere  
best

That she should be prepared; I'll go be-  
fore.

Mar. There will be need of preparation.

[ELDRÉD goes off.

Elea. (enters). Master!  
Your limbs sink under you, shall I sup-  
port you? 2111

Mar. (taking her arm). Woman, I've  
lent my body to the service

Which now thou tak'st upon thee. God  
forbid

That thou shouldst ever meet a like oc-  
casion

With such a purpose in thine heart as  
mine was. 2115

Elea. Oh, why have I to do with things  
like these? [Exit.

SCENE changes to the door of ELDRÉD'S  
cottage—IDONEA seated—enter ELDRÉD.

Eld. Your Father, Lady, from a wilful  
hand

Has met unkindness; so indeed he told  
me, •

And you remember such was my report:  
From what has just befallen me I have  
cause 2123

To fear the very worst.

*Idon.* My Father is dead;  
Why dost thou come to me with words  
like these?

*Eld.* A wicked Man should answer for  
his crimes.

*Idon.* Thou seest me what I am.

*Eld.* It was most heinous,  
And doth call out for vengeance.

*Idon.* Do not add,  
I prithee, to the harm thou'st done already. 2126

*Eld.* Hereafter you will thank me for  
this service.

Hard by a Man I met, who, from plain  
proofs

Of interfering Heaven, I have no doubt,  
Laid hands upon your Father. Fit it were  
You should prepare to meet him.

*Idon.* I have nothing 2131  
To do with others; help me to my Father—

[*She turns and sees MARMADUKE  
leaning on ELEANOR—throws  
herself upon his neck, and after  
some time,*

In joy I met thee, but a few hours past;  
And thus we meet again; one human stay  
Is left me still in thee. Nay, shake not so.

*Mar.* In such a wilderness—to see no  
thing, 2136

No, not the pitying moon!

*Idon.* And perish so.

*Mar.* Without a dog to moan for him.

*Idon.* Think not of it,  
But enter there and see him how he sleeps,  
Tranquil as he had died in his own bed.

*Mar.* Tranquil—why not?

*Idon.* Oh, peace!

*Mar.* He is at peace; 2141  
His body is at rest: there was a plot,  
A hideous plot, against the soul of man:  
It took effect—and yet I baffled it,  
In some degree.

*Idon.* Between us stood, I thought,  
A cup of consolation, filled from Heaven  
For both our needs; must I, and in thy  
presence, 2147

Alone partake of it?—Belovèd Marma-  
duke!

*Mar.* Give me a reason why the wisest  
thing

That the earth owns shall never choose to  
die, 2150  
But some one must be near to count his  
groans.

The wounded deer retires to solitude,  
And dies in solitude: all things but man,  
All die in solitude.

[*Moving towards the cottage door.*

Mysterious God,

If she had never lived I had not done it!—

*Idon.* Alas, the thought of such a cruel  
death 2156

Has overwhelmed him.—I must follow.

*Eld.* Lady!

You will do well; (*she goes*) unjust sus-  
picion may

Cleave to this Stranger: if, upon his  
entering,

The dead Man heave a groan, or from his  
side 2160

Uplift his hand—that would be evidence.

*Elea.* Shame! Eldred, shame!

*Mar.* (*both returning*). The dead have  
but one face. (*To himself.*)

And such a Man—so meek and unoffend-  
ing—

Helpless and harmless as a babe: a Man  
By obvious signal to the world's pro-  
tection 2165

Solemnly dedicated—to decoy him!—

*Idon.* Oh, had you seen him living!—

*Mar.* I (so filled

With horror is this world) am unto thee  
The thing most precious that it now con-  
tains:

Therefore through me alone must be re-  
vealed 2170

By whom thy Parent was destroyed,  
Idonea!

I have the proofs!—

*Idon.* O miserable Father!

Thou didst command me to bless all man-  
kind;

Nor to this moment have I ever wished  
Evil to any living thing; but hear me,  
Hear me, ye Heavens!—(*kneeling*)—may  
vengeance haunt the fiend 2176

For this most cruel murder: let him live  
And move in terror of the elements;

The thunder send him on his knees to  
prayer

In the open streets, and let him think he sees, 2180

If e'er he entereth the house of God,  
The roof, self-moved, unsettling o'er his head;

And let him, when he would lie down at night,

Point to his wife the blood-drops on his pillow!

*Mar.* My voice was silent, but my heart hath joined thee. 2185

*Idon.* (*leaning on MARMADUKE.*) Left to the mercy of that savage Man!

How could he call upon his Child!—O Friend! [*Turns to MARMADUKE.*]

My faithful true and only Comforter.

*Mar.* Ay, come to me and weep. (*He kisses her.*)

(*To ELDRED.*) Yes, Varlet, look, The devils at such sights do clap their hands. [*ELDRED retires alarmed.*]

*Idon.* Thy vest is torn, thy cheek is deadly pale; 2191

Hast thou pursued the monster?

*Mar.* I have found him.—

Oh! would that thou hadst perished in the flames!

*Idon.* Here art thou, then can I be desolate?

*Mar.* There was a time, when this protecting hand 2195

Availed against the mighty; never more Shall blessings wait upon a deed of mine.

*Idon.* Wild words for me to hear, for me, an orphan,

Committed to thy guardianship by Heaven; 2199

And, if thou hast forgiven me, let me hope, In this deep sorrow, trust, that I am thine For closer care;—here, is no malady.

[*Taking his arm.*]

*Mar.* There, is a malady—

(*Striking his heart and forehead.*) And here, and here,

A mortal malady. I am accurst: All nature curses me, and in my heart

Thy curse is fixed; the truth must be laid bare. 2206

It must be told, and borne. I am the man, (*Abused, betrayed, but how it matters not*) Presumptuous above all that ever breathed,

Who, casting as I thought a guilty Person Upon Heaven's righteous judgment, did become 2211

An instrument of Fiends. Through me, through me,

Thy Father perished.

*Idon.* Perished—by what mischance?

*Mar.* Belovèd! if I dared, so would I call thee—

Conflict must cease, and, in thy frozen heart, 2215

The extremes of suffering meet in absolute peace. [*He gives her a letter.*]

*Idon.* (*reads*) "Be not surprised if you hear that some signal judgment has befallen the man who calls himself your father; he is now with me, as his signature will show: abstain from conjecture till you see me."

"HERBERT.

"MARMADUKE."

The writing Oswald's; the signature my Father's: 2225

(*Looks steadily at the paper*) And here is yours,—or do my eyes deceive me?

You have then seen my Father?

*Mar.* He has leaned

Upon this arm.

*Idon.* You led him towards the Convent?

*Mar.* That Convent was Stone-Arthur Castle. Thither

We were his guides. I on that night resolved 2230

That he should wait thy coming till the day Of resurrection.

*Idon.* Miserable Woman,

Too quickly moved, too easily giving way, I put denial on thy suit, and hence, 2234

With the disastrous issue of last night, Thy perturbation, and these frantic words.

Be calm, I pray thee!

*Mar.* Oswald—

*Idon.* Name him not.

*Enter female Beggar.*

*Beg.* And he is dead!—that Moor—how shall I cross it?

By night, by day, never shall I be able To travel half a mile alone.—Good Lady!

Forgive me!—Saints forgive me. Had I thought 2241

It would have come to this!—

*Idon.* What brings you hither? speak!

*Beg.* (*pointing to MARMADUKE*). This innocent Gentleman. Sweet heavens! I told him

Such tales of your dead Father!—God is my judge,

I thought there was no harm: but that bad Man, 2245

He bribed me with his gold, and looked so fierce.

Mercy! I said I know not what—oh pity me—

I said, sweet Lady, you were not his Daughter—

Pity me, I am haunted;—thrice this day My conscience made me wish to be struck blind; 2250

And then I would have prayed, and had no voice.

*Idon.* (*to MARMADUKE*). Was it my Father?—no, no, no, for he

Was meek and patient, feeble, old and blind, Helpless, and loved me dearer than his life.

—But hear me. For *one* question, I have a heart 2255

That will sustain me. Did you murder him?

*Mar.* No, not by stroke of arm. But learn the process:

Proof after proof was pressed upon me; guilt

Made evident, as seemed, by blacker guilt, Whose impious folds enwrapped even thee; and truth 2260

And innocence, embodied in his looks, His words and tones and gestures, did but serve

With me to aggravate his crimes, and heaped

Ruin upon the cause for which they pleaded.

Then pity crossed the path of my resolve: Confounded, I looked up to Heaven, and cast, 2266

*Idonea*! thy blind Father on the Ordeal Of the bleak Waste—left him—and so he died!

[*IDONEA sinks senseless; Beggar, ELEANOR, &c., crowd round, and bear her off.*]

Why may we speak these things, and do no more;

Why should a thrust of the arm have such a power. 2270

And words that tell these things be heard in vain?

*She* is not dead. Why!—if I loved this Woman,

I would take care she never woke again; But she WILL wake, and she will weep for me,

And say no blame was mine—and so, poor fool, 2275

Will waste her curses on another name.

[*He walks about distractedly.*]

*Enter OSWALD.*

OSWALD (*to himself*). Strong to o'erturn, strong also to build up.

[*To MARMADUKE.*]

The starts and sallies of our last encounter Were natural enough; but that, I trust,

Is all gone by. You have cast off the chains 2280

That fettered your nobility of mind— Delivered heart and head!

Let us to Palestine; This is a paltry field for enterprise.

*Mar.* Ay, what shall we encounter next? This issue—

'Twas nothing more than darkness deepening darkness, 2285

And weakness crowned with the impotence of death!—

Your pupil is, you see, an apt proficient (*ironically*).

Start not!—Here is another face hard by; Come, let us take a peep at both together,

And, with a voice at which the dead will quake, 2290

Resound the praise of your morality— Of this too much.

[*Drawing OSWALD towards the Cottage—stops short at the door.*]

Men are there, millions, Oswald, Who with bare hands would have plucked out thy heart

And flung it to the dogs: but I am raised Above, or sunk below, all further sense

Of provocation. Leave me, with the weight Of that old Man's forgiveness on thy heart,

Pressing as heavily as it doth on mine.  
 Coward I have been; know, there lies not  
 now, 2299

Within the compass of a mortal thought,  
 A deed that I would shrink from;—but  
 to endure,

That is my destiny. May it be thine:  
 Thy office, thy ambition, be henceforth  
 To feed remorse, to welcome every sting  
 Of penitential anguish, yea with tears.  
 When seas and continents shall lie be-  
 tween us— 2306

The wider space the better—we may find  
 In such a course fit links of sympathy,  
 An incommunicable rivalry  
 Maintained, for peaceful ends beyond our  
 view. 2310

*[Confused voices—several of the  
 band enter—rush upon OSWALD  
 and seize him.]*

One of them. I would have dogged him  
 to the jaws of hell—

Osw. Ha! is it so!—That vagrant  
 Hag!—this comes

Of having left a thing like her alive!  
*[Aside.]*

Several voices. Despatch him!

Osw. If I pass beneath a rock  
 And shout, and, with the echo of my voice,  
 Bring down a heap of rubbish, and it  
 crush me, 2316  
 I die without dishonour. Famished,  
 starved,

A Fool and Coward blended to my wish!  
*[Smiles scornfully and exultingly  
 at MARMADUKE.]*

Wal. 'Tis done! *(stabs him).*

Another of the band. The ruthless traitor!  
 Mar. A rash deed!—

With that reproof I do resign a station  
 Of which I have been proud.

Wil. *(approaching MARMADUKE).* O my  
 poor Master! 2321

Mar. Discerning Monitor, my faithful  
 Wilfred,

Why art thou here? *[Turning to WALLACE.]*  
 Wallace, upon these Borders,

Many there be whose eyes will not want  
 cause

To weep that I am gone. Brothers in  
 arms! 2325

Raise on that dreary Waste a monument  
 That may record my story: nor let words—  
 Few must they be, and delicate in their  
 touch

As light itself—be there withheld from Her  
 Who, through most wicked arts, was made  
 an orphan 2330

By One who would have died a thousand  
 times

To shield her from a moment's harm. To  
 you,

Wallace and Wilfred, I commend the  
 Lady,

By lowly nature reared, as if to make her  
 In all things worthier of that noble birth,  
 Whose long-suspended rights are now on  
 the eve 2336

Of restoration: with your tenderest care  
 Watch over her, I pray—sustain her—

*Several of the band (eagerly).* Captain!

Mar. No more of that; in silence hear  
 my doom:

A hermitage has furnished fit relief 2340  
 To some offenders; other penitents,

Less patient in their wretchedness, have  
 fallen,

Like the old Roman, on their own sword's  
 point.

They had their choice: a wanderer must  
 I go,

The Spectre of that innocent Man, my  
 guide. 2345

No human ear shall ever hear me speak;  
 No human dwelling ever give me food,

Or sleep, or rest: but over waste and wild,  
 In search of nothing that this earth can  
 give,

But expiation, will I wander on— 2350  
 A Man by pain and thought compelled to  
 live,

Yet loathing life—till anger is appeased  
 In Heaven, and Mercy gives me leave to  
 die.

# POEMS REFERRING TO THE PERIOD OF CHILDHOOD.

## I.

[Composed March 23, 1802.—Published 1807.]

My heart leaps up when I behold  
A rainbow in the sky:  
So was it when my life began;  
So is it now I am a man;  
So be it when I shall grow old,  
Or let me die!  
The Child is father of the Man;  
And I could wish my days to be  
Bound each to each by natural piety.

## II.

### TO A BUTTERFLY.

[Composed March 14, 1802.—Published 1807.]

STAY near me—do not take thy flight!  
A little longer stay in sight!  
Much converse do I find in thee,  
Historian of my infancy!  
Float near me; do not yet depart!  
Dead times revive in thee:  
Thou bring'st, gay creature as thou art!  
A solemn image to my heart,  
My father's family!

Oh! pleasant, pleasant were the days,  
The time, when in our childish plays,  
My sister Emmeline<sup>1</sup> and I  
Together chased the butterfly!  
A very hunter did I rush  
Upon the prey;—with leaps and springs  
I followed on from brake to bush;  
But ~~she~~ God love her! feared to brush  
The dust from off its wings.

## III.

### THE SPARROW'S NEST.

[Composed 1801.—Published 1807.]

BEHOLD, within the leafy shade,  
Those bright blue eggs together laid!  
On me the chance-discovered sight  
Gleamed like a vision of delight.

I started—seeming to espy  
The home and sheltered bed,  
The Sparrow's dwelling, which, hard by  
My Father's house, in wet or dry  
My sister Emmeline<sup>1</sup> and I  
Together visited.

She looked at it and seemed to fear it;  
Dreading, tho' wishing, to be near it:  
Such heart was in her, being then  
A little Prattler among men.  
The Blessing of my later years  
Was with me when a boy:  
She gave me eyes, she gave me ears;  
And humble cares, and delicate fears;  
A heart, the fountain of sweet tears;  
And love, and thought, and joy.

## IV.

### FORESIGHT.

[Composed April 23, 1802.—Published 1807.]

THAT is work of waste and ruin—  
Do as Charles and I are doing!  
Strawberry-blossoms, one and all,  
We must spare them—here are many:  
Look at it—the flower is small,  
Small and low, though fair as any:  
Do not touch it! summers two  
I am older, Anne, than you.

Pull the primrose, sister Anne!  
Pull as many as you can.  
—Here are daisies, take your fill;  
Pansies, and the cuckoo-flower:  
Of the lofty daffodil  
Make your bed, or make your bower;  
Fill your lap and fill your bosom;  
Only spare the strawberry-blossom!

Primroses, the Spring may love them—  
Summer knows but little of them:  
Violets, a barren kind,  
Withered on the ground must lie;

<sup>1</sup> See Editor's Note, p. 897.

Daisies leave no fruit behind  
When the pretty flowerets die;  
Pluck them, and another year  
As many will be blowing here.

God has given a kindlier power 25  
To the favoured strawberry-flower.  
Hither soon as spring is fled  
You and Charles and I will walk;  
Lurking berries, ripe and red,  
Then will hang on every stalk, 30  
Each within its leafy bower;  
And for that promise spare the flower!

## V.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF A CHILD THREE YEARS OLD.

[Composed 1811.—Published 1815.]

LOVING she is, and tractable, though wild;  
And Innocence hath privilege in her  
To dignify arch looks and laughing eyes;  
And feats of cunning; and the pretty  
round

Of trespasses, affected to provoke 5  
Mock-chastisement and partnership in  
play.

And, as a faggot sparkles on the hearth,  
Not less if unattended and alone  
Than when both young and old sit ga-  
thered round

And take delight in its activity; 10  
Even so this happy Creature of herself  
Is all-sufficient; solitude to her  
Is blithe society, who fills the air  
With gladness and involuntary songs.  
Light are her sallies as the tripping  
fawn's 15

Forth-startled from the fern where she  
lay couched;

Unthought-of, unexpected, as the stir  
Of the soft breeze ruffling the meadow-  
flowers,

Or from before it chasing wantonly  
The many-coloured images imprest 20  
Upon the bosom of a placid lake.

## VI.

### ADDRESS TO A CHILD,

DURING A BOISTEROUS WINTER EVENING.  
BY MY SISTER.

[Composed 1806.—Published 1815.]

WHAT way does the Wind come? What  
way does he go?

He rides over the water, and over the  
snow;

Through wood, and through vale; and  
o'er rocky height,

Which the goat cannot climb, takes his  
sounding flight;

He tosses about in every bare tree, 5  
As, if you look up, you plainly may see;  
But how he will come, and whither he  
goes,

There's never a scholar in England knows.

He will suddenly stop in a cunning nook,  
And ring a sharp 'larum;—but, if you  
should look, 10

There's nothing to see but a cushion of  
snow,

Round as a pillow, and whiter than milk,  
And softer than if it were covered with  
silk.

Sometimes he'll hide in the cave of a rock,  
Then whistle as shrill as the buzzard cock;  
—Yet seek him,—and what shall you find  
in the place? 16

Nothing but silence and empty space;  
Save, in a corner, a heap of dry leaves,  
That he's left, for a bed, to beggars or  
thieves!

As soon as 'tis daylight to-morrow, with  
me 20

You shall go to the orchard, and then you  
will see

That he has been there, and made a great  
rout,

And cracked the branches, and strewn  
them about;

Heaven grant that he spare but that one  
upright twig

That looked up at the sky so proud and  
big 25

All last summer, as well you know,  
Studded with apples, a beautiful show!

Hark! over the roof he makes a pause,  
 And growls as if he would fix his claws  
 Right in the slates, and with a huge  
 rattle 30  
 Drive them down, like men in a battle:  
 —But let him range round; he does us no  
 harm,  
 We build up the fire, we're snug and  
 warm;  
 Untouched by his breath see the candle  
 shines bright,  
 And burns with a clear and steady light;  
 Books have we to read,—but that half-  
 stifled knell, 35  
 Alas! 'tis the sound of the eight o'clock  
 bell.  
 —Come now we'll to bed! and when we  
 are there  
 He may work his own will, and what  
 shall we care?  
 He may knock at the door,—we'll not let  
 him in; 40  
 May drive at the windows,—we'll laugh  
 at his din;  
 Let him seek his own home wherever it be;  
 Here's a *cozie* warm house for Edward<sup>1</sup>  
 and me.

## VII.

## THE MOTHER'S RETURN.

BY THE SAME.

[Composed April or May, 1807.—Published 1815.]

A MONTH, sweet Little-ones, is past  
 Since your dear Mother went away,—  
 And she to-morrow will return;  
 To-morrow is the happy day.

O blessed tidings! thought of joy! 5  
 The eldest heard with steady glee;  
 Silent he stood; then laughed amain,—  
 And shouted, "Mother, come to me!"

Louder and louder did he shout,  
 With witless hope to bring her near!— 10  
 "Nay, patience! patience, little boy;  
 Your tender mother cannot hear."

I told of hills, and far-off towns,  
 And long, long vales to travel through;  
 He listens, puzzled, sore perplexed, 15  
 But he submits; what can he do?

No strife disturbs his sister's breast;  
 She wars not with the mystery  
 Of time and distance, night and day;  
 The bonds of our humanity. 20

Her joy is like an instinct, joy  
 Of kitten, bird, or summer fly;  
 She dances, runs without an aim,  
 She chatters in her ecstasy.

Her brother now takes up the note, 25  
 And echoes back his sister's glee;  
 They hug the infant in my arms,  
 As if to force his sympathy.

Then, settling into fond discourse,  
 We rested in the garden bower; 30  
 While sweetly shone the evening sun  
 In his departing hour.

We told o'er all that we had done,—  
 Our rambles by the swift brook's side  
 Far as the willow-skirted pool, 35  
 Where two fair swans together glide.

We talked of change, of winter gone,  
 Of green leaves on the hawthorn spray,  
 Of birds that build their nests and sing,  
 And all "since Mother went away!" 40

To her these tales they will repeat,  
 To her our new-born tribes will show,  
 The goslings green, the ass's colt,  
 The lambs that in the meadow go.

—But see, the evening star comes forth!  
 To bed the children must depart; 46  
 A moment's heaviness they feel,  
 A sadness at the heart:

'Tis gone—and in a merry fit  
 They run up stairs in gamesome race; 50  
 I, too, infected by their mood,  
 I could have joined the wanton chase.

<sup>1</sup> Edward = Johnnie, the household name of Wordsworth's firstborn. See Note on "To a Butterfly," p. 897.—Ed.

Five minutes past—and, O the change!  
 Asleep upon their beds they lie;  
 Their busy limbs in perfect rest,  
 And closed the sparkling eye.

"And whither are you going, child,  
 To-night along these lonesome ways?"  
 "To Durham," answered she, half wild—  
 "Then come with me into the chaise." 36

## VIII.

## ALICE FELL;

## OR, POVERTY.

[Composed March 12, 18, 1802.—Published 1807.]

THE post-boy drove with fierce career,  
 For threatening clouds the moon had  
 drowned;

When, as we hurried on, my ear  
 Was smitten with a startling sound.

As if the wind blew many ways, 5  
 I heard the sound,—and more and more;  
 It seemed to follow with the chaise,  
 And still I heard it as before.

At length I to the boy called out;  
 He stopped his horses at the word, 10  
 But neither cry, nor voice, nor shout,  
 Nor aught else like it, could be heard.

The boy then smacked his whip, and fast  
 The horses scampered through the rain;  
 But, hearing soon upon the blast 15  
 The cry, I bade him halt again.

Forthwith alighting on the ground,  
 "Whence comes," said I, "this piteous  
 moan?"

And there a little Girl I found,  
 Sitting behind the chaise, alone. 20

"My cloak!" no other word she spake,  
 But loud and bitterly she wept,  
 As if her innocent heart would break;  
 And down from off her seat she leapt.

"What ails you, child?"—she sobbed,  
 "Look here!" 25  
 I saw it in the wheel entangled,  
 A weather-beaten rag as e'er  
 From any garden scare-crow dangled.

There, twisted between nave and spoke,  
 It hung, nor could at once be freed; 30  
 But our joint pains unloosed the cloak,  
 A miserable rag indeed!

Insensible to all relief  
 Sat the poor girl, and forth did send  
 Sob after sob, as if her grief  
 Could never, never have an end. 40

"My child, in Durham do you dwell?"  
 She checked herself in her distress,  
 And said, "My name is Alice Fell;  
 I'm fatherless and motherless.

"And I to Durham, Sir, belong." 45  
 Again, as if the thought would choke  
 Her very heart, her grief grew strong;  
 And all was for her tattered cloak!

The chaise drove on; our journey's end  
 Was nigh; and, sitting by my side, 50  
 As if she had lost her only friend  
 She wept, nor would be pacified.

Up to the tavern-door we post;  
 Of Alice and her grief I told;  
 And I gave money to the host, 55  
 To buy a new cloak for the old.

"And let it be of duffil grey,  
 As warm a cloak as man can sell!"  
 Proud creature was she the next day,  
 The little orphan, Alice Fell! 60

## IX.

## LUCY GRAY;

## OR, SOLITUDE.

[Composed 1799.—Published 1800.]

OFT I had heard of Lucy Gray:  
 And, when I crossed the wild,  
 I chanced to see at break of day  
 The solitary child.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew; 5  
 She dwelt on a wide moor,  
 —The sweetest thing that ever grew  
 Beside a human door!

You yet may spy the fawn at play,  
The hare upon the green ;  
But the sweet face of Lucy Gray  
Will never more be seen.

10

And then an open field they crossed:  
The marks were still the same ;  
They tracked them on, nor ever lost ;  
And to the bridge they came.

50

"To-night will be a stormy night—  
You to the town must go ;  
And take a lantern, Child, to light  
Your mother through the snow."

15

They followed from the snowy bank  
Those footmarks, one by one,  
Into the middle of the plank ;  
And further there were none !

55

"That, Father ! will I gladly do :  
'Tis scarcely afternoon—  
The minster-clock has just struck two,  
And yonder is the moon !"

20

—Yet some maintain that to this day  
She is a living child ;  
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray  
Upon the lonesome wild.

60

At this the Father raised his hook,  
And snapped a faggot-band ;  
He plied his work ;—and Lucy took  
The lantern in her hand.

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,  
And never looks behind ;  
And sings a solitary song  
That whistles in the wind.

## X.

## WE ARE SEVEN.

[Composed 1798.—Published 1800.]

Not blither is the mountain roe :  
With many a wanton stroke  
Her feet disperse the powdery snow,  
That rises up like smoke.

25

The storm came on before its time :  
She wandered up and down ;  
And many a hill did Lucy climb :  
But never reached the town.

30

—A SIMPLE Child,  
That lightly draws its breath,  
And feels its life in every limb,  
What should it know of death ?

The wretched parents all that night  
Went shouting far and wide ;  
But there was neither sound nor sight  
To serve them for a guide.

35

I met a little cottage Girl :  
She was eight years old, she said ;  
Her hair was thick with many a curl  
That clustered round her head.

5

At day-break on a hill they stood  
That overlooked the moor ;  
And thence they saw the bridge of wood,  
A furlong from their door.

40

She had a rustic, woodland air,  
And she was wildly clad :  
Her eyes were fair, and very fair ;  
—Her beauty made me glad.

10

They wept—and, turning homeward, cried,  
"In heaven we all shall meet ;"  
—When in the snow the mother spied  
The print of Lucy's feet.

45

"Sisters and brothers, little maid,  
How many may you be ?"  
"How many ? Seven in all," she said,  
And wondering looked at me.

15

Then downwards from the steep hill's  
edge  
They tracked the footmarks small ;  
And through the broken hawthorn hedge,  
And by the long stone-wall ;

45

"And where are they ? I pray you tell."  
She answered, "Seven are we ;  
And two of us at Conway dwell,  
And two are gone to sea."

20

"Two of us in the church-yard lie,  
My sister and my brother ;  
And, in the church-yard cottage, I  
Dwell near them with my mother."

"You say that two at Conway dwell, 25  
And two are gone to sea,  
Yet ye are seven! I pray you tell,  
Sweet Maid, how this may be."

Then did the little Maid reply,  
"Seven boys and girls are we; 30  
Two of us in the church-yard lie,  
Beneath the church-yard tree."

"You run about, my little Maid,  
Your limbs they are alive;  
If two are in the church-yard laid, 35  
Then ye are only five."

"Their graves are green, they may be  
seen,"  
The little Maid replied,  
"Twelve steps or more from my mother's  
door,  
And they are side by side. 40

"My stockings there I often knit,  
My kerchief there I hem;  
And there upon the ground I sit,  
And sing a song to them.

"And often after sun-set, Sir, 45  
When it is light and fair,  
I take my little porringer,  
And eat my supper there.

"The first that died was sister Jane;  
In bed she moaning lay, 50  
Till God released her of her pain;  
And then she went away.

"So in the church-yard she was laid;  
And, when the grass was dry,  
Together round her grave we played, 55  
My brother John and I.

"And when the ground was white with  
snow,  
And I could run and slide,  
My brother John was forced to go,  
And he lies by her side." 60

"How many are you, then," said I,  
"If they two are in heaven?"  
Quick was the little Maid's reply,  
"O Master! we are seven."

"But they are dead; those two are dead!  
Their spirits are in heaven!" 66  
'Twas throwing words away; for still  
The little Maid would have her will,  
And said, "Nay, we are seven!"

## XI.

### THE IDLE SHEPHERD-BOYS;

OR, DUNGEON-GHYLL FORCE.<sup>1</sup>

A PASTORAL.

[Composed 1800.—Published 1800.]

THE valley rings with mirth and joy;  
Among the hills the echoes play  
A never never ending song,  
To welcome in the May.  
The magpie chatters with delight; 5  
The mountain raven's youngling brood  
Have left the mother and the nest;  
And they go rambling east and west  
In search of their own food;  
Or through the glittering vapours dart 10  
In very wantonness of heart.

Beneath a rock, upon the grass,  
Two boys are sitting in the sun;  
Their work, if any work they have,  
Is out of mind—or done. 15  
On pipes of sycamore they play  
The fragments of a Christmas hymn;  
Or with that plant which in our dale  
We call stag-horn, or fox's tail,  
Their rusty hats they trim: 20  
And thus, as happy as the day,  
Those Shepherds wear the time away.

Along the river's stony marge  
The sand-lark chants a joyous song;  
The thrush is busy in the wood, 25  
And carols loud and strong.  
A thousand lambs are on the rocks,  
All newly born! both earth and sky  
Keep jubilee, and, more than all,  
Those boys with their green coronal; 30  
They never hear the cry,

<sup>1</sup> *Ghyll*, in the dialect of Cumberland and Westmoreland, is a short and, for the most part, a steep narrow valley, with a stream running through it. *Force* is the word universally employed in these dialects for waterfall.

That plaintive cry ! which up the hill  
Comes from the depth of Dungeon-Ghyll.

Said Walter, leaping from the ground,  
"Down to the stump of yon old yew 35  
We'll for our whistles run a race."

—Away the shepherds flew ;  
They leapt—they ran—and when they 40  
came

Right opposite to Dungeon-Ghyll,  
Seeing that he should lose the prize, 40  
"Stop !" to his comrade Walter cries—  
James stopped with no good will :  
Said Walter then, exulting ; "Here  
You'll find a task for half a year. 44

"Cross, if you dare, where I shall cross—  
Come on, and tread where I shall tread."  
The other took him at his word,  
And followed as he led.

It was a spot which you may see  
If ever you to Langdale go ; 50  
Into a chasm a mighty block  
Hath fallen, and made a bridge of rock :  
The gulf is deep below ;  
And, in a basin black and small,  
Receives a lofty waterfall. 55

With staff in hand across the cleft  
The challenger pursued his march ;  
And now, all eyes and feet, hath gained  
The middle of the arch.  
When list ! he hears a piteous moan— 60  
Again !—his heart within him dies—  
His pulse is stopped, his breath is lost,  
He totters, pallid as a ghost,  
And, looking down, espies  
A lamb, that in the pool is pent 65  
Within that black and fearful rent.

The lamb had slipped into the stream,  
And safe without a bruise or wound  
The cataract had borne him down 70  
Into the gulf profound.  
His dam had seen him when he fell,  
She saw him down the torrent borne ;  
And, while with all a mother's love  
She from the lofty rocks above  
Sent forth a cry forlorn, 75  
The lamb, still swimming round and  
round,  
Made answer to that plaintive sound.

When he had learnt what thing it was,  
That sent this rueful cry, I ween 80  
The Boy recovered heart, and told  
The sight which he had seen.  
Both gladly now deferred their task ;  
Nor was there wanting other aid—  
A Poet, one who loves the brooks  
Far better than the sages' books, 85  
By chance had thither strayed ;  
And there the helpless lamb he found  
By those huge rocks encompassed round.

He drew it from the troubled pool,  
And brought it forth into the light : 90  
The Shepherds met him with his charge,  
An unexpected sight !  
Into their arms the lamb they took,  
Whose life and limbs the flood had spared ;  
Then up the steep ascent they hied, 95  
And placed him at his mother's side ;  
And gently did the Bard  
Those idle Shepherd-boys upbraid,  
And bade them better mind their trade.

## XII.

## ANECDOTE FOR FATHERS.

"Retine vim istam, falsa enim dicam, si coges."  
ETSEBIVS.

[Composed 1798.—Published 1798.]

I HAVE a boy of five years old ;  
His face is fair and fresh to see ;  
His limbs are cast in beauty's mould,  
And dearly he loves me.

One morn we strolled on our dry walk, 5  
Our quiet home all full in view,  
And held such intermitted talk  
As we are wont to do.

My thoughts on former pleasures ran ;  
I thought of Kilve's delightful shore, 10  
Our pleasant home when spring began,  
A long, long year before.

A day it was when I could bear  
Some fond regrets to entertain ;  
With so much happiness to spare, 15  
I could not feel a pain.

The green earth echoed to the feet  
Of lambs that bounded through the glade,  
From shade to sunshine, and as fleet  
From sunshine back to shade. 20

Birds warbled round me—and each  
trace

Of inward sadness had its charm;  
Kilve, thought I, was a favoured place,  
And so is Liswyn farm.

My boy beside me tripped, so slim 25  
And graceful in his rustic dress!  
And, as we talked, I questioned him,  
In very idleness.

"Now tell me, had you rather be,"  
I said, and took him by the arm, 30  
"On Kilve's smooth shore, by the green  
sea,  
Or here at Liswyn farm?"

In careless mood he looked at me,  
While still I held him by the arm,  
And said, "At Kilve I'd rather be 35  
Than here at Liswyn farm."

"Now, little Edward, say why so:  
My little Edward, tell me why."—  
"I cannot tell, I do not know."—  
"Why, this is strange," said I; 40

"For here are woods, hills smooth and  
warm:  
There surely must some reason be  
Why you would change sweet Liswyn  
farm  
For Kilve by the green sea."

At this my boy hung down his head, 45  
He blushed with shame, nor made  
reply;  
And three times to the child I said,  
"Why, Edward, tell me why?"

His head he raised—there was in sight,  
It caught his eye, he saw it plain—  
Upon the house-top, glittering bright, 50  
A broad and gilded vane.

Then did the boy his tongue unlock,  
And eased his mind with this reply:  
"At Kilve there was no weather-cock; 55  
And that's the reason why."

O dearest, dearest boy! my heart  
For better lore would seldom yearn,  
Could I but teach the hundredth part  
Of what from thee I learn. 60

## XIII.

## RURAL ARCHITECTURE.

[Composed (probably) 1800.—Published 1800.]

THERE'S George Fisher, Charles Fleming,  
and Reginald Shore,  
Three rosy-cheeked school-boys, the high-  
est not more  
Than the height of a counsellor's bag;  
To the top of GREAT HOW<sup>1</sup> did it please  
them to climb:  
And there they built up, without mortar  
or lime, 5

A Man on the peak of the Crag.  
They built him of stones gathered up as  
they lay:  
They built him and christened him all in  
one day,  
An urchin both vigorous and hale;  
And so without scruple they called him  
Ralph Jones. 10  
Now Ralph is renowned for the length of  
his bones;  
The Magog of Legberthwaite dale.

Just half a week after, the wind sallied  
forth,  
And, in anger or merriment, out of the  
north,  
Coming on with a terrible pother, 15  
From the peak of the crag blew the giant  
away.  
And what did these school-boys? The  
very next day  
They went and they built up another.

—Some little I've seen of blind boisterous  
works  
By Christian disturbers more savage than  
Turks, 20  
Spirits busy to do and undo:  
At remembrance whereof my blood some-  
times will flag;  
Then, light-hearted Boys, to the top of  
the crag;  
And I'll build up a giant with you.

<sup>1</sup> GREAT HOW is a single and conspicuous hill,  
which rises towards the foot of Thirimere, on the  
western side of the beautiful dale of Legber-  
thwaite, along the high road between Keswick  
and Ambleside.

## XIV.

## THE PET-LAMB.

## A PASTORAL.

[Composed 1800.—Published 1800.]

THE dew was falling fast, the stars began  
to blink;

I heard a voice; it said, "Drink, pretty  
creature, drink!"

And, looking o'er the hedge, before me  
I espied

A snow-white mountain-lamb with a  
Maiden at its side.

Nor sheep nor kine were near; the lamb  
was all alone, 5

And by a slender cord was tethered to a  
stone;

With one knee on the grass did the little  
Maiden kneel,

While to that mountain-lamb she gave  
its evening meal.

The lamb, while from her hand he thus  
his supper took,

Seemed to feast with head and ears; and  
his tail with pleasure shook. 10

"Drink, pretty creature, drink," she said  
in such a tone

That I almost received her heart into my  
own.

'Twas little Barbara Lewthwaite, a child  
of beauty rare!

I watched them with delight, they were  
a lovely pair.

Now with her empty can the Maiden  
turned away: 15

But e'en ten yards were gone her foot-  
steps did she stay.

Right towards the lamb she looked; and  
from a shady place

I unobserved could see the workings of  
her face:

If Nature to her tongue could measured  
numbers bring,

Thus, thought I, to her lamb that little  
Maid might sing: 20

"What ails thee, young One? what? Why  
pull so at thy cord?

Is it not well with thee? well both for bed  
and board?

Thy plot of grass is soft, and green as  
grass can be;

Rest, little young One, rest; what is't  
that aileth thee?

"What is it thou wouldst seek? What is  
wanting to thy heart? 25

Thy limbs, are they not strong? And  
beautiful thou art:

This grass is tender grass; these flowers  
they have no peers;

And that green corn all day is rustling  
in thy ears!

"If the sun be shining hot, do but stretch  
thy woollen chain,

This beech is standing by, its covert thou  
canst gain; 30

For rain and mountain-storms! the like  
thou need'st not fear,

The rain and storm are things that  
scarcely can come here.

"Rest, little young One, rest; thou hast  
forgot the day

When my father found thee first in places  
far away;

Many flocks were on the hills, but thou  
wert owned by none, 35

And thy mother from thy side for ever-  
more was gone.

"He took thee in his arms, and in pity  
brought thee home:

A blessed day for thee! then whither  
wouldst thou roam?

A faithful nurse thou hast; the dam that  
did thee year

Upon the mountain-tops no kinder could  
have been. 40

"Thou know'st that twice a day I have  
brought thee in this can

Fresh water from the brook, as clear as  
ever ran;

And twice in the day, when the ground  
is wet with dew,

I bring thee draughts of milk, warm  
milk it is and new.

"Thy limbs will shortly be twice as stout  
as they are now, 45  
Then I'll yoke thee to my cart like a pony  
in the plough;  
My playmate thou shalt be; and when  
the wind is cold  
Our hearth shall be thy bed, our house  
shall be thy fold.

"It will not, will not rest!—Poor creature,  
can it be  
That 'tis thy mother's heart which is  
working so in thee? 50  
Things that I know not of belike to thee  
are dear,  
And dreams of things which thou canst  
neither see nor hear.

"Alas, the mountain-tops that look so  
green and fair!  
I've heard of fearful winds and darkness  
that come there;  
The little brooks that seem all pastime  
and all play, 55  
When they are angry, roar like lions for  
their prey.

"Here thou need'st not dread the raven in  
the sky;  
Night and day thou art safe,—our cottage  
is hard by.  
Why bleat so after me? Why pull so at  
thy chain?  
Sleep—and at break of day I will come  
to thee again!" 60

—As homeward through the lane I went  
with lazy feet,  
This song to myself did I oftentimes  
repeat;  
And it seemed, as I retraced the ballad  
line by line,  
That but half of it was hers, and one half  
of it was *mine*.

Again, and once again, did I repeat the  
song; 65  
"Nay," said I, "more than half to the  
damsel must belong,  
For she looked with such a look, and she  
spoke with such a tone,  
That I almost received her heart into my  
own."

## XV.

## TO H. C.

SIX YEARS OLD.

[Composed 1802.—Published 1807.]

O THOU! whose fancies from afar are  
brought;  
Who of thy words dost make a mock  
apparel,  
And fittest to unutterable thought  
The breeze-like motion and the self-born  
carol;  
Thou faery voyager! that dost float 5  
In such clear water, that thy boat  
May rather seem  
To brood on air than on an earthly  
stream;  
Suspended in a stream as clear as sky,  
Where earth and heaven do make one  
imagery; 10  
O blessed vision! happy child!  
Thou art so exquisitely wild,  
I think of thee with many fears  
For what may be thy lot in future years.

I thought of times when Pain might  
be thy guest, 15  
Lord of thy house and hospitality;  
And Grief, uneasy lover! never rest  
But when she sate within the touch of  
thee.  
O too industrious folly!  
O vain and causeless melancholy! 20  
Nature will either end thee quite;  
Or, lengthening out thy season of delight,  
Preserve for thee, by individual right,  
A young lamb's heart among the full-  
grown flocks.  
What hast thou to do with sorrow, 25  
Or the injuries of to-morrow?  
Thou art a dew-drop, which the morn  
brings forth,  
Ill fitted to sustain unkindly shocks,  
Or to be trailed along the soiling earth;  
A gem that glitters while it lives, 30  
And no forewarning gives;  
But, at the touch of wrong, without a  
strife  
Slips in a moment out of life.

## XVI.

## INFLUENCE OF NATURAL OBJECTS

IN CALLING FORTH AND STRENGTHENING  
THE IMAGINATION IN BOYHOOD AND  
EARLY YOUTH.

[Composed 1799.—Published in *The Friend*,  
Dec. 28, 1809; ed. 1815.]

FROM AN UNPUBLISHED POEM.

[This extract is reprinted from *The Friend*.]

WISDOM and Spirit of the universe !  
Thou Soul, that art the Eternity of  
thought !

And giv'st to forms and images a breath  
And everlasting motion ! not in vain,  
By day or star-light, thus from my first  
dawn 5

Of childhood didst thou intertwine for me  
The passions that build up our human  
soul ;

Not with the mean and vulgar works  
of Man ;

But with high objects, with enduring  
things,

With life and nature ; purifying thus 10  
The elements of feeling and of thought,  
And sanctifying by such discipline  
Both pain and fear,—until we recognise  
A grandeur in the beatings of the heart.

Nor was this fellowship vouchsafed  
to me 15

With stinted kindness. In November  
days,

When vapours rolling down the valleys  
made

A lonely scene more lonesome ; among  
woods

At noon ; and 'mid the calm of summer  
nights,

When, by the margin of the trembling  
lake, 20

Beneath the gloomy hills, homeward I  
went

In solitude, such intercourse was mine :  
Mine was it in the fields both day and  
night,

And by the waters, all the summer long.

And in the frosty season, when the sun 25  
Was set, and, visible for many a mile,  
The cottage-windows through the twilight  
blazed,

I heeded not the summons : happy time  
It was indeed for all of us ; for me  
It was a time of rapture ! Clear and  
loud

The village-clock tolled six—I wheeled  
about, 31

Proud and exulting like an untired horse  
That cares not for his home.—All shod  
with steel

We hissed along the polished ice, in  
games

Confederate, imitative of the chase 35  
And woodland pleasures,—the resound-  
ing horn,

The pack loud-chiming, and the hunted  
hare.

So through the darkness and the cold we  
flew,

And not a voice was idle : with the din  
Smitten, the precipices rang aloud ; 40

The leafless trees and every icy crag  
Tinkled like iron ; while far-distant hills  
Into the tumult sent an alien sound

Of melancholy, not unnoticed while the  
stars,

Eastward, were sparkling clear, and in  
the west 45

The orange sky of evening died away.

Not seldom from the uproar I retired  
Into a silent bay, or sportively  
Glanced sideways, leaving the tumultuous  
throng,

To cut across the reflex of a star ; 50  
Image that, flying still before me, gleamed  
Upon the glassy plain : and oftentimes,

When we had given our bodies to the  
wind,

And all the shadowy banks on either side  
Came sweeping through the darkness,

spinning still 55

The rapid line of motion, then at once  
Have I, reclining back upon my heels,

Stopped short ; yet still the solitary cliffs  
Wheeled by me—even as if the earth had  
rolled

With visible motion her diurnal round ! 60

Behind me did they stretch in solemn  
train,  
Feebler and feebler, and I stood and  
watched  
Till all was tranquil as a summer sea.

## XVII.

## THE LONGEST DAY.

ADDRESSED TO MY DAUGHTER, DORA.

[Composed 1817.—Published 1820.]

LET us quit the leafy arbour,  
And the torrent murmuring by;  
For the sun is in his harbour,  
Weary of the open sky.

Evening now unbinds the fetters  
Fashioned by the glowing light;  
All that breathe are thankful debtors  
To the harbinger of night.

Yet by some grave thoughts attended  
Eve renews her calm career;  
For the day that now is ended  
Is the longest of the year.

Dora! sport, as now thou sportest,  
On this platform, light and free;  
Take thy bliss, while longest, shortest, 15  
Are indifferent to thee!

Who would check the happy feeling  
That inspires the linnet's song?  
Who would stop the swallow, wheeling  
On her pinions swift and strong? 20

Yet, at this impressive season,  
Words which tenderness can speak  
From the truths of homely reason  
Might exalt the loveliest cheek;

And, while shades to shades succeeding 25  
Steal the landscape from the sight,  
I would urge this moral pleading,  
Last forerunner of "Good night!"

SUMMER ebbs;—each day that follows  
Is a reflux from on high,  
Tending to the darksome hollows  
Where the frosts of winter lie.

He who governs the creation,  
In his providence, assigned  
Such a gradual declination  
To the life of human kind. 35

Yet we mark it not;—fruits redden,  
Fresh flowers blow as flowers have blown,  
And the heart is loth to deaden  
Hopes that she so long hath known. 40

Be thou wiser, youthful Maiden!  
And when thy decline shall come,  
Let not flowers, or boughs fruit-laden,  
Hide the knowledge of thy doom.

Now, even now, ere wrapped in slumber,  
Fix thine eyes upon the sea 45  
That absorbs time, space, and number;  
Look thou to Eternity!

Follow thou the flowing river  
On whose breast are thither borne 50  
All deceived, and each deceiver,  
Through the gates of night and morn;

Through the year's successive portals;  
Through the bounds which many a star  
Marks, not mindless of frail mortals, 55  
When his light returns from far.

Thus when thou with Time hast travelled  
Toward the mighty gulf of things,  
And the mazy stream unravelled  
With thy best imaginings; 60

Think, if thou on beauty leanest,  
Think how pitiful that stay,  
Did not virtue give the meanest  
Charms superior to decay.

Duty, like a strict preceptor, 65  
Sometimes frowns, or seems to frown;  
Choose her thistle for thy sceptre,  
While youth's roses are thy crown.

Grasp it,—if thou shrink and tremble,  
Fairest damsel of the green, 70  
Thou wilt lack the only symbol  
That proclaims a genuine queen;

And ensures those palms of honour  
Which selected spirits wear,  
Bending low before the Donor, 75  
Lord of heaven's unchanging year!

## XVIII.

## THE NORMAN BOY.

[Composed ?.—Published 1842.]

HIGH on a broad unfertile tract of forest-  
skirted Down,  
Nor kept by Nature for herself, nor made  
by man his own,  
From home and company remote and  
every playful joy,  
Served, tending a few sheep and goats,  
a ragged Norman Boy.

Him never saw I, nor the spot; but from  
an English Dame, 5  
Stranger to me and yet my friend, a  
simple notice came,  
With suit that I would speak in verse of  
that sequestered child  
Whom, one bleak winter's day, she met  
upon the dreary Wild.

His flock, along the woodland's edge with  
relics sprinkled o'er  
Of last night's snow, beneath a sky threat-  
ening the fall of more, 10  
Where tufts of herbage tempted each,  
were busy at their feed,  
And the poor Boy was busier still, with  
work of anxious heed.

There *was* he, where of branches rent and  
withered and decayed,  
For covert from the keen north wind, his  
hands a hut had made.  
A tiny tenement, forsooth, and frail, as  
needs must be 15  
A thing of such materials framed, by a  
builder such as he.

The hut stood finished by his pains, nor  
seemingly lacked aught  
That skill or means of his could add, but  
the architect had wrought  
Some limber twigs into a Cross, well-  
shaped with fingers nice,  
To be engrafted on the top of his small  
edifice. 20

That Cross he now was fastening there,  
as the surest power and best  
For supplying all deficiencies, all wants  
of the rude nest  
In which, from burning heat, or tempest  
driving far and wide,  
The innocent Boy, else shelterless, his  
lonely head must hide.

That Cross belike he also raised as a  
standard for the true 25  
And faithful service of his heart in the  
worst that might ensue  
Of hardship and distressful fear, amid the  
houseless waste  
Where he, in his poor self so weak, by  
Providence was placed.

—Here, Lady! might I cease; but nay,  
let *us* before we part  
With this dear holy shepherd-boy breathe  
a prayer of earnest heart, 30  
That unto him, where'er shall lie his life's  
appointed way,  
The Cross, fixed in his soul, may prove an  
all-sufficing stay.

## XIX.

## THE POET'S DREAM.

SEQUEL TO "THE NORMAN BOY."

[Composed ?.—Published 1842.]

JUST as those final words were penned,  
the sun broke out in power,  
And gladdened all things; but, as chanced,  
within that very hour,  
Air blackened, thunder growled, fire  
flashed from clouds that hid the  
sky,  
And for the Subject of my Verse I heaved  
a pensive sigh.

Nor could my heart by second thoughts  
from heaviness be cleared, 5  
For bodied forth before my eyes the cross-  
crowned hut appeared;  
And while around it storm as fierce  
seemed troubling earth and air,  
I saw, within, the Norman Boy kneeling  
alone in prayer.

The Child, as if the thunder's voice spake  
with articulate call,  
Bowed meekly in submissive fear, before  
the Lord of All; 10  
His lips were moving; and his eyes, up-  
raised to sue for grace,  
With soft illumination cheered the dim-  
ness of that place.

How beautiful is holiness!—what wonder  
if the sight,  
Almost as vivid as a dream, produced a  
dream at night?  
It came with sleep and showed the Boy,  
no cherub, not transformed, 15  
But the poor ragged Thing whose ways  
my human heart had warmed.

Me had the dream equipped with wings,  
so I took him in my arms,  
And lifted from the grassy floor, stilling  
his faint alarms,  
And bore him high through yielding air  
my debt of love to pay,  
By giving him, for both our sakes, an  
hour of holiday. 20

I whispered, "Yet a little while, dear  
Child! thou art my own,  
To show thee some delightful thing, in  
country or in town.  
What shall it be? a mirthful throng? or  
that holy place and calm  
St. Denis, filled with royal tombs, or the  
Church of Notre Dame?

"St. Ouen's golden Shrine? Or choose  
what else would please thee most  
Of any wonder Normandy, or all proud  
France, can boast!" 26  
"My Mother," said the Boy, "was born  
near to a blessed Tree,  
The Chapel Oak of Allonville; good  
Angel, show it me!"

On wings from broad and steadfast poise  
let loose by this reply,  
For Allonville, o'er down and dale, away  
then did we fly; 30  
O'er town and tower we fled, and fields  
in May's fresh verdure drest;  
The wings they did not flag; the Child,  
though grave, was not deprest.

But who shall show, to waking sense, the  
gleam of light that broke  
Forth from his eyes, when first the Boy  
looked down on that huge oak,  
For length of days so much revered, so  
famous where it stands 35  
For twofold hallowing—Nature's care,  
and work of human hands?

Strong as an Eagle with my charge I  
glided round and round  
The wide-spread boughs, for view of door,  
window, and stair that wound  
Gracefully up the gnarled trunk; nor  
left we unsurveyed  
The pointed steeple peering forth from  
the centre of the shade. 40

I lighted—opened with soft touch the  
chapel's iron door,  
Past softly, leading in the Boy; and  
while from roof to floor,  
From floor to roof, all round his eyes the  
Child with wonder cast,  
Pleasure on pleasure crowded in, each  
livelier than the last.

For, deftly framed within the trunk, the  
sanctuary showed, 45  
By light of lamp and precious stones,  
that glimmered here, there glowed,  
Shrine, Altar, Image, Offerings hung in  
sign of gratitude;  
Sight that inspired accordant thoughts;  
and speech I thus renewed:

"Hither the Afflicted come, as thou hast  
heard thy Mother say,  
And, kneeling, supplication make to our  
Lady de la Paix; 50  
What mournful sighs have here been  
heard, and, when the voice was stopt  
By sudden pangs; what bitter tears have  
on this pavement dropt!

"Poor Shepherd of the naked Down, a  
favoured lot is thine,  
Far happier lot, dear Boy, than brings  
full many to this shrine;  
From body pains and pains of soul thou  
needest no release, 55  
Thy hours as they flow on are spent, if  
not in joy in peace.

"Then offer up thy heart to God in  
thankfulness and praise,  
Give to Him prayers, and many thoughts,  
in thy most busy days;  
And in His sight the fragile Cross, on thy  
small hut, will be  
Holy as that which long hath crowned  
the Chapel of this Tree; 60  
"Holy as that far seen which crowns the  
sumptuous Church in Rome  
Where thousands meet to worship God  
under a mighty Dome;  
He sees the bending multitude, He hears  
the choral rites,  
Yet, not the less, in children's hymns  
and lonely prayer delimits.  
"God for His service needeth not proud  
work of human skill; 65  
They please Him best who labour most  
to do in peace His will:  
So let us strive to live, and to our Spirits  
will be given  
Such wings as, when our Saviour calls,  
shall bear us up to heaven."  
The Boy no answer made by words, but,  
so earnest was his look,  
Sleep fled, and with it fled the dream—  
recorded in this book, 70  
Lest all that passed should melt away in  
silence from my mind,  
As visions still more bright have done,  
and left no trace behind.  
But oh! that Country-man of thine,  
whose eye, loved Child, can see  
A pledge of endless bliss in acts of early  
piety,  
In verse, which to thy ear might come,  
would treat this simple theme, 75  
Nor leave untold our happy flight in that  
adventurous dream.  
Alas the dream, to thee, poor Boy! to  
thee from whom it flowed,  
Was nothing, scarcely can be aught, yet  
'twas bounteously bestowed,  
If I may dare to cherish hope that gentle  
eyes will read  
Not loth, and listening Little-ones, heart-  
touched, their fancies feed<sup>1</sup>, 80

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 397

XX.

THE WESTMORELAND GIRL.

TO MY GRANDCHILDREN.

[Composed June 6, 1845.—Published 1845.]

PART I.

SEEK who will delight in fable,  
I shall tell you truth. A Lamb  
Leapt from this steep bank to follow  
'Cross the brook its thoughtless dam.

Far and wide on hill and valley 5  
Rain had fallen, unceasing rain,  
And the bleating mother's Young-one  
Struggled with the flood in vain:

But, as chanced, a Cottage-maiden 10  
(Ten years scarcely had she told)  
Seeing, plunged into the torrent,  
Clasped the Lamb and kept her hold.

Whirled adown the rocky channel,  
Sinking, rising, on they go,  
Peace and rest, as seems, before them 15  
Only in the lake below.

Oh! it was a frightful current  
Whose fierce wrath the Girl had braved;  
Clap your hands with joy my Hearers,  
Shout in triumph, both are saved; 20

Saved by courage that with danger  
Grew, by strength the gift of love,  
And belike a guardian angel  
Came with succour from above.

PART II.

Now, to a maturer Audience, 25  
Let me speak of this brave Child  
Left among her native mountains  
With wild Nature to run wild.

So, unwatched by love maternal,  
Mother's care no more her guide, 30  
Fared this little bright-eyed Orphan  
Even while at her father's side.

Spare your blame,—remembrance makes  
him  
Loth to rule by strict command;  
Still upon his cheek are living 35  
Touches of her infant hand,

|  |    |  |    |
|--|----|--|----|
| Dear caresses given in pity,<br>Sympathy that soothed his grief,<br>As the dying mother witnessed<br>To her thankful mind's relief.                            | 40 | She, fulfilling her sire's office,<br>Rang alone the far-heard knell,<br>Tribute, by her hand, in sorrow,<br>Paid to One who loved her well.         | 65 |
| Time passed on ; the Child was happy,<br>Like a Spirit of air she moved,<br>Wayward, yet by all who knew her<br>For her tender heart beloved.                  |    | When his spirit was departed,<br>On that service she went forth ;<br>Nor will fail the like to render<br>When his corse is laid in earth.            | 70 |
| Scarcely less than sacred passions,<br>Bred in house, in grove, and field,<br>Link her with the inferior creatures,<br>Urge her powers their rights to shield. | 45 | What then wants the Child to temper,<br>In her breast, unruly fire,<br>To control the froward impulse<br>And restrain the vague desire ?             | 75 |
| Anglers, bent on reckless pastime,<br>Learn how she can feel alike<br>Both for tiny harmless minnow<br>And the fierce sharp-toothed pike.                      | 50 | Easily a pious training<br>And a steadfast outward power<br>Would supplant the weeds, and cherish<br>In their stead each opening flower.             | 80 |
| Merciful protectress, kindling<br>Into anger or disdain ;<br>Many a captive hath she rescued,<br>Others saved from lingering pain.                             | 55 | Thus the fearless Lamb-deliv'rer,<br>Woman-grown, meek-hearted, sage,<br>May become a blest example<br>For her sex, of every age.                    |    |
| Listen yet awhile ;—with patience<br>Hear the homely truths I tell,<br>She in Grasmere's old church-steeple<br>Tolled this day the passing bell.               | 60 | Watchful as a wheeling eagle,<br>Constant as a soaring lark,<br>Should the country need a heroine,<br>She might prove our Maid of Arc.               | 85 |
| Yes, the wild Girl of the mountains<br>To their echoes gave the sound,<br>Notice punctual as the minute,<br>Warning solemn and profound.                       |    | Leave that thought ; and here be uttered<br>Prayer that Grace divine may raise<br>Her humane courageous spirit<br>Up to heaven, thro' peaceful ways. | 90 |

# POEMS FOUNDED ON THE AFFECTIONS.

## I.

### THE BROTHERS.

[Composed (in or about) February, 1800.—Published 1800.]

“THESE Tourists, heaven preserve us!  
needs must live

A profitable life: some glance along,  
Rapid and gay, as if the earth were air,  
And they were butterflies to wheel about  
Long as the summer lasted: some, as  
wise, 5

Perched on the forehead of a jutting crag,  
Pencil in hand and book upon the knee,  
Will look and scribble, scribble on and  
look,

Until a man might travel twelve stout  
miles,

Or reap an acre of his neighbour's corn. 10  
But, for that moping Son of Idleness,  
Why can he tarry *yonder*?—In our church-  
yard

Is neither epitaph nor monument,  
Tombstone nor name—only the turf we  
tread

And a few natural graves.”

To Jane, his wife,  
Thus spake the homely Priest of Enner-  
dale. 16

It was a July evening; and he sate  
Upon the long stone-seat beneath the  
eaves

Of his old cottage,—as it chanced, that  
day,

Employed in winter's work. Upon the  
stone 20

His wife sate near him, teasing matted  
wool,

While, from the twin cards toothed with  
glittering wire,

He fed the spindle of his youngest child,  
Who, in the open air, with due accord  
Of busy hands and back-and-forward  
steps, 25

Her large round wheel was turning. To-  
wards the field

In which the Parish Chapel stood alone,  
Girt round with a bare ring of mossy  
wall,

While half an hour went by, the Priest  
had sent

Many a long look of wonder: and at last,  
Risen from his seat, beside the snow-white  
ridge 31

Of carded wool which the old man had  
piled

He laid his implements with gentle care,  
Each in the other locked; and down the  
path,

That from his cottage to the church-yard  
led, 35

He took his way, impatient to accost  
The Stranger, whom he saw still lingering  
there.

’Twas one well known to him in former  
days,

A Shepherd-lad; who ere his sixteenth  
year

Had left that calling, tempted to entrust  
His expectations to the fickle winds 41

And perilous waters; with the mariners  
A fellow-mariner; and so had fared

Through twenty seasons; but he had been  
reared 44

Among the mountains, and he in his heart  
Was half a shepherd on the stormy seas.

Of in the piping shrouds had Leonard  
heard

The tones of waterfalls, and inland sounds  
Of caves and trees:—and when the regular  
wind

Between the tropics filled the steady  
 sail,  
 And blew with the same breath through  
 days and weeks, 51  
 Lengthening invisibly its weary line  
 Along the cloudless Main, he, in those  
 hours  
 Of tiresome indolence, would often hang  
 Over the vessel's side, and gaze and  
 gaze;  
 And, while the broad blue wave and  
 sparkling foam 56  
 Flashed round him images and hues that  
 wrought  
 In union with the employment of his  
 heart,  
 He, thus by feverish passion overcome,  
 Even with the organs of his bodily eye,  
 Below him, in the bosom of the deep, 61  
 Saw mountains; saw the forms of sheep  
 that grazed  
 On verdant hills—with dwellings among  
 trees,  
 And shepherds clad in the same country  
 grey  
 Which he himself had worn.<sup>1</sup>

And now, at last,  
 From perils manifold, with some small  
 wealth 66  
 Acquired by traffic 'mid the Indian  
 Isles,  
 To his paternal home he is returned,  
 With a determined purpose to resume  
 The life he had lived there; both for the  
 sake 70  
 Of many darling pleasures, and the love  
 Which to an only brother he has borne  
 In all his hardships, since that happy  
 time  
 When, whether it blew foul or fair, they  
 two  
 Were brother-shepherds on their native  
 hills. 75  
 —They were the last of all their race:  
 and now,

When Leonard had approached his home,  
 his heart  
 Failed in him; and, not venturing to  
 enquire  
 Tidings of one so long and dearly loved,  
 He to the solitary church-yard turned; 80  
 That, as he knew in what particular  
 spot  
 His family were laid, he thence might  
 learn  
 If still his Brother lived, or to the file  
 Another grave was added.—He had found  
 Another grave,—near which a full half-  
 hour 85  
 He had remained; but, as he gazed, there  
 grew  
 Such a confusion in his memory,  
 That he began to doubt; and even to  
 hope  
 That he had seen this heap of turf be-  
 fore,—  
 That it was not another grave; but one 90  
 He had forgotten. He had lost his  
 path,  
 As up the vale, that afternoon, he walked  
 Through fields which once had been well  
 known to him:  
 And oh what joy this recollection now  
 Sent to his heart! he lifted up his eyes, 95  
 And, looking round, imagined that he  
 saw  
 Strange alteration wrought on every  
 side  
 Among the woods and fields, and that the  
 rocks,  
 And everlasting hills themselves were  
 changed.  
 By this the Priest, who down the field  
 had come, 100  
 Unseen by Leonard, at the church-yard  
 gate  
 Stopped short,—and thence, at leisure,  
 limb by limb  
 Perused him with a gay complacency.  
 Ay, thought the Vicar, smiling to him-  
 self,  
 'Tis one of those who needs must leave  
 the path 105  
 Of the world's business to go wild alone:  
 His arms have a perpetual holiday;

<sup>1</sup> This description of the Calenture is sketched from an imperfect recollection of an admirable one in prose, by Mr. Gilbert, author of the *Hurricane*.

The happy man will creep about the fields,  
Following his fancies by the hour, to bring  
Tears down his cheek, or solitary smiles  
Into his face, until the setting sun 111  
Write fool upon his forehead.—Planted thus  
Beneath a shed that over-arched the gate  
Of this rude church-yard, till the stars appeared  
The good Man might have communed with himself, 115  
But that the Stranger, who had left the grave,  
Approached; he recognised the Priest at once,  
And, after greetings interchanged, and given  
By Leonard to the Vicar as to one  
Unknown to him, this dialogue ensued.  
Leonard. You live, Sir, in these dales,  
a quiet life: 121  
Your years make up one peaceful family;  
And who would grieve and fret, if, welcome come  
And welcome gone, they are so like each other,  
They cannot be remembered? Scarce a funeral 125  
Comes to this church-yard once in eighteen months;  
And yet, some changes must take place among you:  
And you, who dwell here, even among these rocks,  
Can trace the finger of mortality,  
And see, that with our threescore years and ten 130  
We are not all that perish.—I remember,  
(For many years ago I passed this road)  
There was a foot-way all along the fields  
By the brook-side—'tis gone—and that dark cleft!  
To me it does not seem to wear the face 135  
Which then it had!  
Priest. Nay, Sir, for aught I know,  
That chasm is much the same—  
Leonard. But, surely, yonder—

Priest. Ay, there, indeed, your memory is a friend  
That does not play you false.—On that tall pike  
(It is the loneliest place of all these hills) 140  
There were two springs which bubbled side by side,  
As if they had been made that they might be  
Companions for each other: the huge crag  
Was rent with lightning—one hath disappeared;  
The other, left behind, is flowing still. 145  
For accidents and changes such as these,  
We want not store of them;—a water-spout  
Will bring down half a mountain; what a feast  
For folks that wander up and down like you,  
To see an acre's breadth of that wide cliff 150  
One roaring cataract! a sharp May-storm  
Will come with loads of January snow,  
And in one night send twenty score of sheep  
To feed the ravens; or a shepherd dies  
By some untoward death among the rocks: 155  
The ice breaks up and sweeps away a bridge;  
A wood is felled:—and then for our own homes!  
A child is born or christened, a field ploughed,  
A daughter sent to service, a web spun,  
The old house-clock is decked with a new face; 160  
And hence, so far from wanting facts or dates  
To chronicle the time, we all have here  
A pair of diaries,—one serving, Sir,  
For the whole dale, and one for each fire-side—  
Yours was a stranger's judgment: for historians, 165

Commend me to these valleys!

*Leonard.* Yet your Church-yard  
Seems, if such freedom may be used with  
you,

To say that you are heedless of the past :  
An orphan could not find his mother's  
grave :

Here's neither head nor foot-stone, plate  
of brass, 170

Cross-bones nor skull,—type of our earthly  
state

Nor emblem of our hopes : the dead man's  
home

Is but a fellow to that pasture-field.

*Priest.* Why, there, Sir, is a thought  
that's new to me!

The stone-cutters, 'tis true, might beg  
their bread 175

If every English church-yard were like  
ours ;

Yet your conclusion wanders from the  
truth :

We have no need of names and epitaphs ;

We talk about the dead by our fire-sides.

And then, for our immortal part! we  
want 180

No symbols, Sir, to tell us that plain tale :  
The thought of death sits easy on the man  
Who has been born and dies among the  
mountains.

*Leonard.* Your Dalesmen, then, do in  
each other's thoughts

Possess a kind of second life : no doubt 185  
You, Sir, could help me to the history  
Of half these graves?

*Priest.* For eight-score winters past,  
With what I've witnessed, and with what  
I've heard,

Perhaps I might; and, on a winter-  
evening,

If you were seated at my chimney's nook,  
By turning o'er these hillocks one by one,  
We two could travel, Sir, through a  
strange round; 192

Yet all in the broad highway of the world.  
Now there's a grave—your foot is half  
upon it,—

It looks just like the rest; and yet that  
man 195

Died broken-hearted.

*Leonard.* 'Tis a common case.

We'll take another: who is he that lies  
Beneath yon ridge, the last of those three  
graves?

It touches on that piece of native rock  
Left in the church-yard wall.

*Priest.* That's Walter Ewbank. 200  
He had as white a head and fresh a cheek  
As ever were produced by youth and age  
Engendering in the blood of hale four-  
score.

Through five long generations had the  
heart

Of Walter's forefathers o'erflowed the  
bounds 205

Of their inheritance, that single cottage—  
You see it yonder! and those few green  
fields.

They toiled and wrought, and still, from  
sire to son,

Each struggled, and each yielded as be-  
fore

A little—yet a little,—and old Walter, 210  
They left to him the family heart, and  
land

With other burthens than the crop it  
bore.

Year after year the old man still kept up  
A cheerful mind,—and buffeted with bond,  
Interest, and mortgages; at last he  
sank, 215

And went into his grave before his time.

Poor Walter! whether it was care that  
spurred him

God only knows, but to the very last  
He had the lightest foot in Ennerdale:  
His pace was never that of an old  
man: 220

I almost see him tripping down the path  
With his two grandsons after him;—but  
you,

Unless our Landlord be your host to-  
night,

Have far to travel,—and on these rough  
paths 221

Even in the longest day of midsummer—  
*Leonard.* But those two Orphans!

*Priest.* Orphans!—Such they were—  
Yet not while Walter lived:—for, though  
their parents

Lay buried side by side as now they lie,  
The old man was a father to the boys,

Two fathers in one father: and if tears,  
Shed when he talked of them where they  
were not, 231

And hauntings from the infirmity of love,  
Are aught of what makes up a mother's  
heart,

This old Man, in the day of his old age,  
Was half a mother to them.—If you weep,  
Sir, 235

To hear a stranger talking about strangers,  
Heaven bless you when you are among  
your kindred!

Ay—you may turn that way—it is a grave  
Which will bear looking at.

*Leonard.* These boys—I hope  
They loved this good old Man?—

*Priest.* They did—and truly: 240  
But that was what we almost overlooked,  
They were such darlings of each other.

Yes,  
Though from the cradle they had lived  
with Walter,

The only kinsman near them, and though he  
Inclined to both by reason of his age, 245  
With a more fond, familiar, tenderness;

They, notwithstanding, had much love to  
spare,

And it all went into each other's hearts.

*Leonard,* the elder by just eighteen  
months,

Was two years taller: 'twas a joy to see,  
To hear, to meet them!—From their house  
the school 251

Is distant three short miles, and in the  
time

Of storm and thaw, when every water-  
course

And unbridged stream, such as you may  
have noticed

Crossing our roads at every hundred steps,  
Was stoln into a noisy rivulet, 256

Would Leonard then, when elder boys  
remained

At home, go staggering through the slip-  
pery fords,

Bearing his brother on his back. I have  
seen him,

On windy days, in one of those stray  
brooks, 260

Ay, more than once I have seen him, mid-  
leg deep,

Their two books lying both on a dry stone,  
Upon the hither side: and once I said,

As I remember, looking round these rocks  
And hills on which we all of us were  
born, 265

That God who made the great book of the  
world

Would bless such piety—

*Leonard.* It may be then—  
*Priest.* Never did worthier lads break  
English bread;

The very brightest Sunday Autumn saw,  
With all its mealy clusters of ripe nuts,

Could never keep those boys away from  
church, 271

Or tempt them to an hour of sabbath  
breach.

*Leonard and James!* I warrant, every  
corner

Among these rocks, and every hollow  
place

That venturous foot could reach, to one or  
both 275

Was known as well as to the flowers that  
grow there.

Like roe-bucks they went bounding o'er  
the hills;

They played like two young ravens on the  
crags:

Then they could write, ay, and speak too,  
as well

As many of their betters—and for *Leonard!*  
The very night before he went away, 281

In my own house I put into his hand  
A Bible, and I'd wager house and field

That, if he be alive, he has it yet.

*Leonard.* It seems, these Brothers have  
not lived to be 285

A comfort to each other—

*Priest.* That they might  
Live to such end is what both old and  
young

In this our valley all of us have wished,  
And what, for my part, I have often  
prayed:

But *Leonard*—

*Leonard.* Then James still is left  
among you! 290

*Priest.* 'Tis of the elder brother I am  
speaking:

They had an uncle;—he was at that time

A thriving man, and trafficked on the seas:  
 And, but for that same uncle, to this hour  
 Leonard had never handled rope or shroud: 295  
 For the boy loved the life which we lead here;  
 And though of unripe years, a stripling only,  
 His soul was knit to this his native soil.  
 But, as I said, old Walter was too weak  
 To strive with such a torrent; when he died, 300  
 The estate and house were sold; and all their sheep,  
 A pretty flock, and which, for aught I know,  
 Had clothed the Ewbanks for a thousand years:—  
 Well—all was gone, and they were destitute,  
 And Leonard, chiefly for his Brother's sake, 305  
 Resolved to try his fortune on the seas.  
 Twelve years are past since we had tidings from him.  
 If there were one among us who had heard  
 That Leonard Ewbank was come home again,  
 From the Great Gavel,<sup>1</sup> down by Leeza's banks, 310  
 And down the Enna, far as Egremont,  
 The day would be a joyous festival;  
 And those two bells of ours, which there you see—  
 Hanging in the open air—but, O good Sir!  
 This is sad talk—they'll never sound for him— 315  
 Living or dead.—When last we heard of him,  
 He was in slavery among the Moors

<sup>1</sup> The Great Gavel, so called, I imagine, from its resemblance to the gable end of a house, is one of the highest of the Cumberland mountains. It stands at the head of the several vales of Ennerdale, Wastdale, and Borrowdale.

The Leeza is a river which flows into the Lake of Ennerdale: on issuing from the Lake, it changes its name, and is called the End, Eyne, or Enna. It falls into the sea a little below Egremont.

Upon the Barbary coast.—'Twas not a little  
 That would bring down his spirit; and no doubt,  
 Before it ended in his death, the Youth 320  
 Was sadly crossed.—Poor Leonard! when we parted,  
 He took me by the hand, and said to me,  
 If e'er he should grow rich, he would return,  
 To live in peace upon his father's land,  
 And lay his bones among us.  
*Leonard.* If that day 325  
 Should come, 'twould needs be a glad day for him;  
 He would himself, no doubt, be happy then  
 As any that should meet him—  
*Priest.* Happy! Sir—  
*Leonard.* You said his kindred all were in their graves,  
 And that he had one Brother—  
*Priest.* That is but 330  
 A fellow-tale of sorrow. From his youth  
 James, though not sickly, yet was delicate;  
 And Leonard being always by his side  
 Had done so many offices about him,  
 That, though he was not of a timid nature, 335  
 Yet still the spirit of a mountain-boy  
 In him was somewhat checked; and, when his Brother  
 Was gone to sea, and he was left alone,  
 The little colour that he had was soon  
 Stolen from his cheek; he drooped, and  
 pined, and pined— 340  
*Leonard.* But these are all the graves of full-grown men!  
*Priest.* Ay, Sir, that passed away: we took him to us;  
 He was the child of all the dale—he lived  
 Three months with one, and six months with another;  
 And wanted neither food, nor clothes, nor love: 345  
 And many, many happy days were his.  
 But, whether blithe or sad, 'tis my belief  
 His absent Brother still was at his heart.  
 And, when he dwelt beneath our roof, we found  
 (A practice till this time unknown to him) 350

That often, rising from his bed at night,  
He in his sleep would walk about, and  
sleeping

He sought his brother Leonard.—You are  
moved!

Forgive me, Sir: before I spoke to you,  
I judged you most unkindly.

*Leonard.* But this Youth, 355  
How did he die at last?

*Priest.* One sweet May-morning,  
(It will be twelve years since when Spring  
returns)

He had gone forth among the new-dropped  
lambs,

With two or three companions, whom  
their course 359

Of occupation led from height to height  
Under a cloudless sun—till he, at length,  
Through weariness, or, haply, to indulge  
The humour of the moment, lagged be-  
hind.

You see yon precipice;—it wears the shape  
Of a vast building made of many crags;  
And in the midst is one particular  
rock 366

That rises like a column from the vale,  
Whence by our shepherds it is called THE  
PILLAR.

Upon its æry summit crowned with  
heath,

The loiterer, not unnoticed by his com-  
rades, 370

Lay stretched at ease; but, passing by  
the place

On their return, they found that he was  
gone.

No ill was feared; till one of them by  
chance

Entering, when evening was far spent, the  
house

Which at that time was James's home,  
there learned 375

That nobody had seen him all that day:  
The morning came, and still he was un-  
heard of:

The neighbours were alarmed, and to the  
brook

Some hastened; some ran to the lake:  
ere noon

They found him at the foot of that same  
rock 380

Dead, and with mangled limbs. The third  
day after

I buried him, poor Youth, and there he  
lies!

*Leonard.* And that then is his grave!—  
Before his death

You say that he saw many happy years?

*Priest.* Ay, that he did—

*Leonard.* And all went well with him?—

*Priest.* If he had one, the Youth had  
twenty homes. 386

*Leonard.* And you believe, then, that  
his mind was easy?—

*Priest.* Yes, long before he died, he  
found that time

Is a true friend to sorrow; and, unless  
His thoughts were turned on Leonard's  
luckless fortune, 390

He talked about him with a cheerful love.  
*Leonard.* He could not come to an un-  
hallowed end!

*Priest.* Nay, God forbid!—You recollect  
I mentioned

A habit which disquietude and grief  
Had brought upon him; and we all con-  
jectured 395

That, as the day was warm, he had lain  
down

On the soft heath,—and, waiting for his  
comrades,

He there had fallen asleep; that in his  
sleep

He to the margin of the precipice  
Had walked, and from the summit had  
fallen headlong: 400

And so no doubt he perished. When the  
Youth

Fell, in his hand he must have grasped,  
we think,

His shepherd's staff; for on that Pillar of  
rock

It had been caught mid-way; and there  
for years

It hung;—and mouldered there.

The Priest here ended—  
The Stranger would have thanked him,  
but he felt 406

A gushing from his heart, that took away  
The power of speech. Both left the spot  
in silence;

And Leonard, when they reached the  
church-yard gate,  
As the Priest lifted up the latch, turned  
round,—<sup>410</sup>  
And, looking at the grave, he said, "My  
Brother!"  
The Vicar did not hear the words: and  
now  
He pointed towards his dwelling-place,  
entreating  
That Leonard would partake his homely  
fare:  
The other thanked him with an earnest  
voice;<sup>415</sup>  
But added, that, the evening being calm,  
He would pursue his journey. So they  
parted.

It was not long ere Leonard reached a  
grove  
That overhung the road: he there stopped  
short,  
And, sitting down beneath the trees,  
reviewed<sup>420</sup>  
All that the Priest had said: his early  
years  
Were with him:—his long absence, che-  
rished hopes,  
And thoughts which had been his an hour  
before,  
All pressed on him with such a weight,  
that now,  
This vale, where he had been so happy,  
seemed<sup>425</sup>  
A place in which he could not bear to  
live:  
So he relinquished all his purposes.  
He travelled back to Egremont: and  
thence,  
That night, he wrote a letter to the  
Priest,  
Reminding him of what had passed be-  
tween them;<sup>430</sup>  
And adding, with a hope to be forgiven,  
That it was from the weakness of his  
heart  
He had not dared to tell him who he  
was.  
This done, he went on shipboard, and is  
now  
A seaman, a grey-headed Mariner.<sup>435</sup>

## II.

## ARTEGAL AND ELIDURE.

(SEE THE CHRONICLE OF GEOFFREY OF  
MONMOUTH, AND MILTON'S HISTORY  
OF ENGLAND.)

[Composed 1815.—Published 1820.]

WHERE be the temples which in Britain's  
Isle,

For his paternal Gods, the Trojan raised?  
Gone like a morning dream, or like a pile  
Of clouds that in cerulean ether blazed!  
Ere Julius landed on her white-cliffed  
shore,<sup>5</sup>

They sank, delivered o'er  
To fatal dissolution; and, I ween,  
No vestige then was left that such had  
ever been.

Nathless, a British record (long concealed  
In old Armórica, whose secret springs<sup>10</sup>  
No Gothic conqueror ever drank) revealed  
The marvellous current of forgotten things;  
How Brutus came, by oracles impelled,  
And Albion's giants quelled,  
A brood whom no civility could melt,<sup>15</sup>  
"Who never tasted grace, and goodness  
ne'er had felt."

By brave Corineus aided, he subdued,  
And rooted out the intolerable kind;  
And this too-long-polluted land imbued  
With goodly arts and usages refined;<sup>20</sup>  
Whence golden harvests, cities, warlike  
towers,

And pleasure's sumptuous bowers;  
Whence all the fixed delights of house  
and home,  
Friendships that will not break, and love  
that cannot roam.

O, happy Britain! region all too fair<sup>25</sup>  
For self-delighting fancy to endure  
That silence only should inhabit there,  
Wild beasts, or uncouth savages impure!  
But, intermingled with the generous seed,  
Grew many a poisonous weed;<sup>30</sup>  
Thus fares it still with all that takes its  
birth

From human care, or grows upon the  
breast of earth.

Hence, and how soon! that war of vengeance waged

By Guendolen against her faithless lord;  
Till she, in jealous fury unassuaged, 35  
Had slain his paramour with ruthless sword:

Then into Severn hideously defiled,  
She flung her blameless child,  
Sabrina,—vowing that the stream should bear

That name through every age, her hatred to declare. 40

So speaks the Chronicle, and tells of Lear  
By his ungrateful daughters turned adrift.  
Ye lightnings, hear his voice!—they cannot hear,

Nor can the winds restore his simple gift.  
But One there is, a Child of nature meek,  
Who comes her Sire to seek; 46

And he, recovering sense, upon her breast  
Leans smilingly, and sinks into a perfect rest.

There too we read of Spenser's fairy themes,  
And those that Milton loved in youthful years; 50

The sage enchanter Merlin's subtle schemes;  
The feats of Arthur and his knightly peers;  
Of Arthur,—who, to upper light restored,  
With that terrific sword

Which yet he brandishes for future war,  
Shall lift his country's fame above the polar star! 56

What wonder, then, if in such ample field  
Of old tradition, one particular flower  
Doth seemingly in vain its fragrance yield,  
And bloom unnoticed even to this late hour?

Now, gentle Muses, your assistance grant,  
While I this flower transplant 62

Into a garden stored with Poesy;  
Where flowers and herbs unite, and haply  
some weeds be,

That, wanting not wild grace, are from  
all mischief free! 65

A KING more worthy of respect and love  
Than wise Gorbionian ruled not in his day;  
And grateful Britain prospered far above  
All neighbouring countries through his  
righteous sway;

He poured rewards and honours on the good; 70

The oppressor he withstood;  
And while he served the Gods with reverence due,

Fields smiled, and temples rose, and towns  
and cities grew.

He died, whom Artegal succeeds—his son;  
But how unworthy of that sire was he! 75  
A hopeful reign, auspiciously begun,  
Was darkened soon by foul iniquity.

From crime to crime he mounted, till at length

The nobles leagued their strength  
With a vexed people, and the tyrant  
chased; 80

And on the vacant throne his worthier  
Brother placed.

From realm to realm the humbled Exile went,

Suppliant for aid his kingdom to regain;  
In many a court, and many a warrior's tent,

He urged his persevering suit in vain. 85  
Him, in whose wretched heart ambition failed,

Dire poverty assailed;  
And, tired with slights his pride no more  
could brook,

He towards his native country cast a  
longing look.

Fair blew the wished-for wind—the voyage  
sped; 90

He landed; and by many dangers scared,  
“Poorly provided, poorly followed,”  
To Calaterium's forest he repaired.

How changed from him who, born to  
highest place,

Had swayed the royal mace, 95

Flattered and feared, despised yet deified,  
In Troynovant, his seat by silver Thames's  
side!

From that wild region where the crown-  
less king

Lay in concealment with his scanty train,  
Supporting life by water from the spring,  
And such chance food as outlaws can  
obtain, 101

Unto the few whom he esteems his friends  
 A messenger he sends;  
 And from their secret loyalty requires  
 Shelter and daily bread,—the sum of his  
 desires. 105

While he the issue waits, at early morn  
 Wandering by stealth abroad, he chanced  
 to hear  
 A startling outcry made by hound and  
 horn,  
 From which the tusky wild boar flies in  
 fear;  
 And, scouring toward him o'er the grassy  
 plain, 110  
 Behold the hunter train!  
 He bids his little company advance  
 With seeming unconcern and steady coun-  
 tenance.

The royal Elidure, who leads the chase,  
 Hath checked his foaming courser:—can  
 it be! 115  
 Methinks that I should recognise that face,  
 Though much disguised by long adversity!  
 He gazed rejoicing, and again he gazed,  
 Confounded and amazed—

"It is the king, my brother!" and, by  
 sound 120  
 Of his own voice confirmed, he leaps upon  
 the ground.

Long, strict, and tender was the embrace  
 he gave,  
 Feebly returned by daunted Artegal;  
 Whose natural affection doubts enslave,  
 And apprehensions dark and criminal. 125  
 Loth to restrain the moving interview,  
 The attendant lords withdrew;  
 And, while they stood upon the plain apart,  
 Thus Elidure, by words, relieved his  
 struggling heart.

"By heavenly Powers conducted, we have  
 met; 130  
 —O Brother! to my knowledge lost so long,  
 But neither lost to love, nor to regret,  
 Nor to my wishes lost;—forgive the wrong,  
 (Such it may seem) if I thy crown have  
 borne,  
 Thy royal mantle worn: 135

I was their natural guardian; and 'tis just  
 That now I should restore what hath been  
 held in trust."

A while the astonished Artegal stood mute,  
 Then thus exclaimed: "To me, of titles  
 shorn,  
 And stripped of power! me, feeble, desti-  
 tute, 140  
 To me a kingdom! spare the bitter scorn:  
 If justice ruled the breast of foreign kings,  
 Then, on the wide-spread wings  
 Of war, had I returned to claim my right;  
 This will I here avow, not dreading thy  
 despite." 145

"I do not blame thee," Elidure replied;  
 "But, if my looks did with my words  
 agree,

I should at once be trusted, not defied,  
 And thou from all disquietude be free.  
 May the unsullied Goddess of the chase, 150  
 Who to this blessed place 151  
 At this blest moment led me, if I speak  
 With insincere intent, on me her ven-  
 geance wreak!

"Were this same spear, which in my hand  
 I grasp,  
 The British sceptre, here would I to thee  
 The symbol yield; and would undo this  
 clasp, 156

If it confined the robe of sovereignty.  
 Odious to me the pomp of regal court,  
 And joyless sylvan sport,  
 While thou art roving, wretched and  
 forlorn, 160  
 Thy couch the dewy earth, thy roof the  
 forest thorn!"

Then Artegal thus spake: "I only sought  
 Within this realm a place of safe retreat;  
 Beware of rousing an ambitious thought;  
 Beware of kindling hopes for me un-  
 meet! 165

Thou art reputed wise, but in my mind  
 Art pitifully blind:  
 Full soon this generous purpose thou  
 may'st rue,  
 When that which has been done no wishes  
 can undo.

"Who, when a crown is fixed upon his head,  
Would balance claim with claim, and right  
with right? 171

But thou—I know not how inspired, how  
led—

Wouldst change the course of things in  
all men's sight!

And this for one who cannot imitate  
Thy virtue, who may hate: 175  
For, if, by such strange sacrifice restored,  
He reign, thou still must be his king, and  
sovereign lord;

"Lifted in magnanimity above  
Aught that my feeble nature could perform,  
Or even conceive; surpassing me in love  
Far as in power the eagle doth the worm:  
I, Brother! only should be king in name,  
And govern to my shame;  
A shadow in a hated land, while all  
Of glad or willing service to thy share  
would fall." 185

"Believe it not," said Elidure; "respect  
Awaits on virtuous life, and ever most  
Attends on goodness with dominion  
decked,  
Which stands the universal empire's boast;  
This can thy own experience testify: 190  
Nor shall thy foes deny  
That, in the gracious opening of thy reign,  
Our father's spirit seemed in thee to  
breathe again.

"And what if o'er that bright unbosoming  
Clouds of disgrace and envious fortune  
past! 195  
Have we not seen the glories of the spring  
By veil of noontide darkness overcast?  
The frith that glittered like a warrior's  
shield,  
The sky, the gay green field,  
Are vanished; gladness ceases in the  
groves, 200  
And trepidation strikes the blackened  
mountain-coves.

"But is that gloom dissolved? how pass-  
ing clear  
Seems the wide world, far brighter than  
before!  
Even so thy latent worth will re-appear,

Gladdening the people's heart from shore  
to shore; 205  
For youthful faults ripe virtues shall atone;  
Re-seated on thy throne,  
Proof shalt thou furnish that misfortune,  
pain,  
And sorrow, have confirmed thy native  
right to reign.

"But, not to overlook what thou may'st  
know, 210  
Thy enemies are neither weak nor few;  
And circumspect must be our course, and  
slow,  
Or from my purpose ruin may ensue.  
Dismiss thy followers;—let them calmly  
wait  
Such change in thy estate 215  
As I already have in thought devised;  
And which, with caution due, may soon  
be realized."

The Story tells what courses were pursued,  
Until king Elidure, with full consent  
Of all his peers, before the multitude, 220  
Rose,—and, to consummate this just in-  
tent,  
Did place upon his brother's head the  
crown,  
Relinquished by his own;  
Then to his people cried, "Receive your  
lord,  
Gorbonian's first-born son, your rightful  
king restored!" 225

The people answered with a loud acclaim:  
Yet more;—heart-smitten by the heroic  
deed,  
The reinstated Artegal became  
Earth's noblest penitent; from bondage  
freed  
Of vice—thenceforth unable to subvert  
Or shake his high desert. 231  
Long did he reign; and, when he died,  
the tear  
Of universal grief bedewed his honoured  
bier.

Thus was a Brother by a Brother saved;  
With whom a crown (temptation that  
hath set 235  
Discord in hearts of men till they have  
braved

Their nearest kin with deadly purpose met)  
 'Gainst duty weighed, and faithful love,  
 did seem

A thing of no esteem;  
 And, from this triumph of affection pure,  
 He bore the lasting name of "pious Eli-  
 dure!" 241

## III.

## TO A BUTTERFLY.

[Composed April 20, 1802.—Published 1807.]

I've watched you now a full half-hour,  
 Self-poised upon that yellow flower;  
 And, little Butterfly! indeed  
 I know not if you sleep or feed. 5  
 How motionless!—not frozen seas  
 More motionless! and then  
 What joy awaits you, when the breeze  
 Hath found you out among the trees,  
 And calls you forth again!

This plot of orchard-ground is ours; 10  
 My trees they are, my Sister's flowers;  
 Here rest your wings when they are weary;  
 Here lodge as in a sanctuary!  
 Come often to us, fear no wrong;  
 Sit near us on the bough! 15  
 We'll talk of sunshine and of song,  
 And summer days, when we were young;  
 Sweet childish days, that were as long  
 As twenty days are now.

## IV.

## A FAREWELL.

[Finished May 29, 1802.—Published 1815.]

FAREWELL, thou little Nook of mountain-  
 ground,  
 Thou rocky corner in the lowest stair  
 Of that magnificent temple which doth  
 bound  
 One side of our whole vale with grandeur  
 rare;  
 Sweet garden-orchard, eminently fair, 5  
 The loveliest spot that man hath ever  
 found,  
 Farewell!—we leave thee to Heaven's  
 peaceful care,  
 Thee, and the Cottage which thou dost  
 surround.

Our boat is safely anchored by the shore,  
 And there will safely ride when we are  
 gone; 10

The flowering shrubs that deck our hum-  
 ble door

Will prosper, though untended and alone:  
 Fields, goods, and far-off chattels we have  
 none:

These narrow bounds contain our private  
 store

Of things earth makes, and sun doth shine  
 upon; 15

Here are they in our sight—we have no  
 more.

Sunshine and shower be with you, bud  
 and bell!

For two months now in vain we shall be  
 sought;

We leave you here in solitude to dwell  
 With these our latest gifts of tender  
 thought; 20

Thou, like the morning, in thy saffron  
 coat,

Bright gowan, and marsh-marigold, fare-  
 well!

Whom from the borders of the Lake we  
 brought,

And placed together near our rocky Well.

We go for One to whom ye will be dear;  
 And she will prize this Bower, this Indian  
 shed, 25

Our own contrivance, Building without  
 peer!

—A gentle Maid, whose heart is lowly  
 bred,

Whose pleasures are in wild fields gathered,  
 With joyousness, and with a thoughtful  
 cheer, 30

Will come to you; to you herself will wed;  
 And love the blessed life that we lead  
 here.

Dear Spot! which we have watched with  
 tender heed,

Bringing thee chosen plants and blossoms  
 blown

Among the distant mountains, flower and  
 weed, 35

Which thou hast taken to thee as thy  
 own,

Making all kindness registered and known;  
 Thou for our sakes, though Nature's child  
     indeed,  
 Fair in thyself and beautiful alone,  
 Hast taken gifts which thou dost little  
     need. 40

And O most constant, yet most fickle  
 Place,  
 That hast thy wayward moods, as thou  
     dost show  
 To them who look not daily on thy face;  
 Who, being loved, in love no bounds dost  
     know,  
 And say'st, when we forsake thee, "Let  
     them go!" 45  
 Thou easy-hearted Thing, with thy wild  
     race  
 Of weeds and flowers, till we return be  
     slow,  
 And travel with the year at a soft pace.

Help us to tell Her tales of years gone  
     by,  
 And this sweet spring, the best beloved  
     and best; 50  
 Joy will be flown in its mortality;  
 Something must stay to tell us of the  
     rest.  
 Here, thronged with primroses, the steep  
     rock's breast  
 Glittered at evening like a starry sky;  
 And in this bush our sparrow built her  
     nest, 55  
 Of which I sang one song that will not  
     die.

O happy Garden! whose seclusion deep  
 Hath been so friendly to industrious  
     hours;  
 And to soft slumbers, that did gently  
     steep  
 Our spirits, carrying with them dreams of  
     flowers, 60  
 And wild notes warbled among leafy  
     bowers;  
 Two burning months let summer over-  
     leap,  
 And, coming back with Her who will be  
     ours,  
 Into thy bosom we again shall creep.

V.

## STANZAS

WRITTEN IN MY POCKET-COPY OF THOMSON'S  
 "CASTLE OF INDOLENCE."

[Composed May 9-11, 1892.—Published 1815.]

WITHIN our happy Castle there dwelt  
     One  
 Whom without blame I may not over-  
     look;  
 For never sun on living creature shone  
 Who more devout enjoyment with us  
     took:  
 Here on his hours he hung as on a book, 5  
 On his own time here would he float  
     away,  
 As doth a fly upon a summer brook;  
 But go to-morrow, or belike to-day,  
 Seek for him,—he is fled; and whither  
     none can say.

Thus often would he leave our peaceful  
     home, 10  
 And find elsewhere his business or de-  
     light;  
 Out of our Valley's limits did he roam:  
 Full many a time, upon a stormy night,  
 His voice came to us from the neighbour-  
     ing height:  
 Oft could we see him driving full in view  
 At mid-day when the sun was shining  
     bright; 16  
 What ill was on him, what he had to do,  
 A mighty wonder bred among our quiet  
     crew.

Ah! piteous sight it was to see this Man  
 When he came back to us, a withered  
     flower,— 20  
 Or like a sinful creature, pale and wan.  
 Down would he sit; and without strength  
     or power  
 Look at the common grass from hour to  
     hour:  
 And oftentimes, how long I fear to say,  
 Where apple-trees in blossom made a  
     bower, 25  
 Retired in that sunshiny shade he lay;  
 And, like a naked Indian, slept himself  
     away.

Great wonder to our gentle tribe it was  
Whenever from our Valley he withdrew;  
For happier soul no living creature has 30  
Then he had, being here the long day  
through.

Some thought he was a lover, and did  
woo:

Some thought far worse of him, and  
judged him wrong;

But verse was what he had been wedded  
to;

And his own mind did like a tempest  
strong 35

Come to him thus, and drove the weary  
Wight along.

With him there often walked in friendly  
guise,

Or lay upon the moss by brook or tree,  
A noticeable Man with large grey eyes,  
And a pale face that seemed undoubt-  
edly 40

As if a blooming face it ought to be;  
Heavy his low-hung lip did oft appear,  
Deprest by weight of musing Phantasy;  
Profound his forehead was, though not  
severe;

Yet some did think that he had little  
business here: 45

Sweet heaven forefend! his was a lawful  
right;

Noisy he was, and gamesome as a boy;  
His limbs would toss about him with  
delight,

Like branches when strong winds the  
trees annoy. 49

Nor lacked his calmer hours device or toy  
To banish listlessness and irksome care;  
He would have taught you how you might  
employ

Yourself; and many did to him repair,—  
And certes not in vain; he had inven-  
tions rare.

Expedients, too, of simplest sort he tried:  
Long blades of grass, plucked round him  
as he lay, 56

Made, to his ear attentively applied,  
A pipe on which the wind would deftly  
play;

Glasses he had, that little things display,  
The beetle panoplied in gems and gold, 60  
A mailed angel on a battle-day;  
The mysteries that cups of flowers enfold,  
And all the gorgeous sights which fairies  
do behold.

He would entice that other Man to hear  
His music, and to view his imagery: 65  
And, sooth, these two were each to the  
other dear:

No livelier love in such a place could be:  
There did they dwell—from earthly labour  
free,

As happy spirits as were ever seen;  
If but a bird, to keep them company, 70  
Or butterfly sate down, they were, I ween,  
As pleased as if the same had been a  
Maiden-queen.

## VI.

LOUISA<sup>1</sup>.

AFTER ACCOMPANYING HER ON A MOUN-  
TAIN EXCURSION.

[Composed (probably) 1801.—Published 1807.]

I MET Louisa in the shade,  
And, having seen that lovely Maid,  
Why should I fear to say  
That, nymph-like, she is fleet and strong,  
And down the rocks can leap along 5  
Like rivulets in May?

[And she hath smiles to earth unknown;  
Smiles, that with motion of their own  
Do spread, and sink, and rise;  
That come and go with endless play,  
And ever, as they pass away,  
Are hidden in her eyes.<sup>2</sup>]

She loves her fire, her cottage-home;  
Yet o'er the moorland will she roam  
In weather rough and bleak; 9  
And, when against the wind she strains,  
Oh! might I kiss the mountain rains  
That sparkle on her cheek.

<sup>1</sup> On the question of the identity of *Louisa*, see Editor's note on *To a Butterfly*, p. 897.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> This stanza came second in all edd. from 1807 to 1843. It was most unfortunately omitted—for some reason unknown to us—in edd. 1845 and 1849.—Ed.

Take all that's mine "beneath the moon,"  
 If I with her but half a noon  
 May sit beneath the walls  
 Of some old cave, or mossy nook,  
 When up she winds along the brook  
 To hunt the waterfalls.

## VII

[Composed 1799.—Published 1800.]

STRANGE fits of passion have I known :  
 And I will dare to tell,  
 But in the Lover's ear alone,  
 What once to me befell.

When she I loved looked every day  
 Fresh as a rose in June,  
 I to her cottage bent my way,  
 Beneath an evening-moon.

Upon the moon I fixed my eye,  
 All over the wide lea ;  
 With quickening pace my horse drew nigh  
 Those paths so dear to me.

And now we reached the orchard-plot ;  
 And, as we climbed the hill,  
 The sinking moon to Lucy's cot  
 Came near, and nearer still.

In one of those sweet dreams I slept,  
 Kind Nature's gentlest boon !  
 And all the while my eyes I kept  
 On the descending moon.

My horse moved on ; hoof after hoof  
 He raised, and never stopped :  
 When down behind the cottage roof,  
 At once, the bright moon dropped.

What fond and wayward thoughts will  
 slide  
 Into a Lover's head !  
 "O mercy !" to myself I cried,  
 "If Lucy should be dead !"

## VIII

[Composed 1799.—Published 1800.]

SHE dwelt among the untrodden ways  
 Beside the springs of Dove,  
 A Maid whom there were none to praise  
 And very few to love :

A violet by a mossy stone  
 Half hidden from the eye !  
 —Fair as a star, when only one  
 Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know  
 When Lucy ceased to be ;  
 But she is in her grave, and, oh,  
 The difference to me !

## IX

[Composed 1799.—Published 1807.]

I TRAVELLED among unknown men,  
 In lands beyond the sea ;  
 Nor, England ! did I know till then  
 What love I bore to thee.

'Tis past, that melancholy dream !  
 Nor will I quit thy shore  
 A second time ; for still I seem  
 To love thee more and more.

Among thy mountains did I feel  
 The joy of my desire ;  
 And she I cherished turned her wheel  
 Beside an English fire.

Thy mornings showed, thy nights concealed,  
 The bowers where Lucy played ;  
 And thine too is the last green field  
 That Lucy's eyes surveyed.

## X

[Composed 1826.—Published 1827.]

ERE with cold beads of midnight dew  
 Had mingled tears of thine,  
 I grieved, fond Youth ! that thou shouldst  
 sue  
 To haughty Geraldine.

Immoveable by generous sighs,  
 She glories in a train  
 Who drag, beneath our native skies,  
 An Oriental chain.

Pine not like them with arms across,  
 Forgetting in thy care  
 How the fast-rooted trees can toss  
 Their branches in mid air.

The humblest rivulet will take  
 Its own wild liberties;  
 And every day the imprisoned lake 15  
 Is flowing in the breeze.

Then crouch no more on suppliant knee,  
 But scorn with scorn outbrave;  
 A Briton, even in love, should be 20  
 A subject, not a slave!

## XI.

## TO —

[Composed 1824.—Published 1827.]

Look at the fate of summer flowers,  
 Which blow at daybreak, droop ere even-  
 song;  
 And, grieved for their brief date, confess 5  
 that ours,  
 Measured by what we are and ought to be,  
 Measured by all that, trembling, we fore-  
 see, 5  
 Is not so long!

If human Life do pass away,  
 Perishing yet more swiftly than the flower,  
 If we are creatures of a *winter's* day;  
 What space hath Virgin's beauty to dis-  
 close 10  
 Her sweets, and triumph o'er the breath-  
 ing rose?  
 Not even an hour!

The deepest grove whose foliage hid  
 The happiest lovers Arcady might boast,  
 Could not the entrance of this thought 15  
 forbid:  
 O be thou wise as they, soul-gifted Maid!  
 Nor rate too high what must so quickly  
 fade,  
 So soon be lost.

Then shall I've teach some virtuous Youth  
 "To draw, out of the object of his eyes," 20  
 The while on thee they gaze in simple  
 truth,  
 Hues more exalted, "a refined Form,"  
 That dreads not age, nor suffers from the  
 worm,  
 And never dies.

## XII.

## THE FORSAKEN.

[Dated 1804 (W.).—Probably composed earlier.—  
 Published 1842.]

THE peace which others seek they find;  
 The heaviest storms not longest last;  
 Heaven grants even to the guiltiest mind  
 An amnesty for what is past;  
 When will my sentence be reversed? 5  
 I only pray to know the worst;  
 And wish, as if my heart would burst.

O weary struggle! silent years  
 Tell seemingly no doubtful tale;  
 And yet they leave it short, and fears 10  
 And hopes are strong and will prevail.  
 My calmest faith escapes not pain;  
 And, feeling that the hope is vain,  
 I think that he will come again.

## XIII.

[Composed 1800.—Published 1800.]

'Tis said that some have died for love:  
 And here and there a church-yard grave  
 is found  
 In the cold north's unhallowed ground,  
 Because the wretched man himself had  
 slain,  
 His love was such a grievous pain. 5  
 And there is one whom I five years have  
 known;  
 He dwells alone  
 Upon Helvellyn's side:  
 He loved—the pretty Barbara died;  
 And thus he makes his moan: 10  
 Three years had Barbara in her grave  
 been laid  
 When thus his moan he made:  
 "Oh, move, thou Cottage, from behind  
 that oak!  
 Or let the aged tree uprooted lie,  
 That in some other way yon smoke 15  
 May mount into the sky!  
 The clouds pass on; they from the hea-  
 vens depart:  
 I look—the sky is empty space;  
 I know not what I trace;  
 But when I cease to look, my hand is on  
 my heart. 20

"O! what a weight is in these shades!  
Ye leaves,  
That murmur once so dear, when will it  
cease?

Your sound my heart of rest bereaves,  
It robs my heart of peace.  
Thou Thrush, that singest loud—and loud  
and free, 25  
Into yon row of willows flit,  
Upon that alder sit;  
Or sing another song, or choose another  
tree.

"Roll back, sweet Rill! back to thy  
mountain-bounds, 29  
And there for ever be thy waters chained!  
For thou dost haunt the air with sounds  
That cannot be sustained;  
If still beneath that pine-tree's ragged  
bough  
Headlong yon waterfall must come,  
Oh let it then be dumb! 35  
Be anything, sweet Rill, but that which  
thou art now.

"Thou Eglantine, so bright with sunny  
showers,  
Proud as a rainbow spanning half the  
vale,  
Thou one fair shrub, oh! shed thy flowers,  
And stir not in the gale. 40  
For thus to see thee nodding in the air,  
To see thy arch thus stretch and bend,  
Thus rise and thus descend,—  
Disturbs me till the sight is more than I  
can bear."

The Man who makes this feverish com-  
plaint 45  
Is one of giant stature, who could dance  
Equipped from head to foot in iron  
mail.  
Ah gentle Love! if ever thought was  
thine  
To store up kindred hours for me, thy  
face  
Turn from me, gentle Love! nor let me  
walk 50  
Within the sound of Emma's voice, nor  
know  
Such happiness as I have known to-day.

## XIV.

## A COMPLAINT.

[Composed 1806.—Published 1807.]

THERE is a change—and I am poor;  
Your love hath been, nor long ago,  
A fountain at my fond heart's door,  
Whose only business was to flow;  
And flow it did; not taking heed 5  
Of its own bounty, or my need.

What happy moments did I count!  
Blest was I then all bliss above!  
Now, for that consecrated fount  
Of murmuring, sparkling, living love, 10  
What have I? shall I dare to tell?  
A comfortless and hidden well.

A well of love—it may be deep—  
I trust it is,—and never dry:  
What matter? if the waters sleep 15  
In silence and obscurity.  
—Such change, and at the very door  
Of my fond heart, hath made me poor.

## XV.

## TO —

[Composed 1824.—Published 1827.]

LET other bards of angels sing,  
Bright suns without a spot;  
But thou art no such perfect thing:  
Rejoice that thou art not!

Heed not tho' none should call thee fair;  
So, Mary, let it be 6  
If nought in loveliness compare  
With what thou art to me.

True beauty dwells in deep retreats,  
Whose veil is unremoved 10  
Till heart with heart in concord beats,  
And the lover is beloved.

## XVI.

[Composed ?.—Published 1845.]

YES! thou art fair, yet be not moved  
To scorn the declaration,  
That sometimes I in thee have loved  
My fancy's own creation.

Imagination needs must stir;  
 Dear Maid, this truth believe,  
 Minds that have nothing to confer  
 Find little to perceive.

Be pleased that nature made thee fit  
 To feed my heart's devotion,  
 By laws to which all Forms submit  
 In sky, air, earth, and ocean.

## XVII.

[Composed 1824.—Published 1827.]

How rich that forehead's calm expanse!  
 How bright that heaven-directed glance!  
 —Waft her to glory, winged Powers,  
 Ere sorrow be renewed,  
 And intercourse with mortal hours  
 Bring back a humbler mood!  
 So looked Cecilia when she drew  
 An Angel from his station;  
 So looked; not ceasing to pursue  
 Her tuneful adoration!

But hand and voice alike are still;  
 No sound *here* sweeps away the will  
 That gave it birth: in service meek  
 One upright arm sustains the cheek,  
 And one across the bosom lies—  
 That rose, and now forgets to rise,  
 Subdued by breathless harmonies  
 Of meditative feeling;  
 Mute strains from worlds beyond the  
 skies,  
 Through the pure light of female eyes  
 Their sanctity revealing!

## XVIII.

[Composed ?.—Published 1845.]

WHAT heavenly smiles! O Lady mine,  
 Through my very heart they shine;  
 And, if my brow gives back their light,  
 Do thou look gladly on the sight;  
 As the clear Moon with modest pride  
 Beholds her own bright beams  
 Reflected from the mountain's side  
 And from the headlong streams.

## XIX.

TO —

[Composed 1824.—Published 1827.]

O DEARER far than light and life are  
 dear,  
 Full oft our human foresight I deplore;  
 Trembling, through my unworthiness,  
 with fear  
 That friends, by death disjoined, may  
 meet no more!

Misgivings, hard to vanquish or control,  
 Mix with the day, and cross the hour of  
 rest;  
 While all the future, for thy purer soul,  
 With "sober certainties" of love is blest.

That sigh of thine, not meant for human  
 ear,  
 Tells that these words thy humbleness  
 offend;  
 Yet bear me up—else faltering in the rear  
 Of a steep march: support me to the end.

Peace settles where the intellect is meek,  
 And Love is dutiful in thought and deed;  
 Through Thee communion with that Love  
 I seek:  
 The faith Heaven strengthens where he  
 moulds the Creed.

## XX.

LAMENT OF MARY QUEEN OF  
SCOTS

ON THE EVE OF A NEW YEAR.

[Composed 1817.—Published 1820.]

## I.

SMILE of the Moon!—for so I name  
 That silent greeting from above;  
 A gentle flash of light that came  
 From her whom drooping captives love;  
 Or art thou of still higher birth?  
 Thou that didst part the clouds of earth  
 My torpor to reprove!

## II.

Bright boon of pitying Heaven!—alas,  
 I may not trust thy placid cheer!  
 Pondering that Time to-night will pass  
 The threshold of another year;

For years to me are sad and dull;  
My very moments are too full  
Of hopelessness and fear.

## III.

And yet the soul-awakening gleam, 15  
That struck perchance the farthest cone  
Of Scotland's rocky wilds, did seem  
To visit me, and me alone;  
Me, unapproached by any friend,  
Save those who to my sorrows lend 20  
Tears due unto their own.

## IV.

To-night the church-tower bells will ring  
Through these wide realms a festive peal;  
To the new year a welcoming;  
A tuneful offering for the weal 25  
Of happy millions lulled in sleep;  
While I am forced to watch and weep,  
By wounds that may not heal.

## V.

Born all too high, by wedlock raised  
Still higher—to be cast thus low! 30  
Would that mine eyes had never gazed  
On aught of more ambitious show  
Than the sweet flowerets of the fields!  
—It is my royal state that yields  
This bitterness of woe. 35

## VI.

Yet how?—for I, if there be truth  
In the world's voice, was passing fair;  
And beauty, for confiding youth,  
Those shocks of passion can prepare  
That kill the bloom before its time; 40  
And blanch, without the owner's crime,  
The most resplendent hair.

## VII.

Unblest distinction! showered on me  
To bind a lingering life in chains:  
All that could quit my grasp, or flee, 45  
Is gone;—but not the subtle stains  
Fixed in the spirit; for even here  
Can I be proud that jealous fear  
Of what I was remains.

## VIII.

A Woman rules my prison's key; 50  
A sister Queen, against the bent  
Of law and holiest sympathy,

Detains me, doubtful of the event;  
Great God, who feel'st for my distress,  
My thoughts are all that I possess, 55  
O keep them innocent!

## IX.

Farewell desire of human aid,  
Which abject mortals vainly court!  
By friends deceived, by foes betrayed,  
Of fears the prey, of hopes the sport; 60  
Nought but the world-redeeming Cross  
Is able to supply my loss,  
My burthen to support.

## X.

Hark! the death-note of the year  
Sounded by the castle-clock! 65  
From her sunk eyes a stagnant tear  
Stole forth, unsettled by the shock;  
But oft the woods renewed their green,  
Ere the tired head of Scotland's Queen  
Reposed upon the block! 70

## XXI.

## THE COMPLAINT

## OF A FORSAKEN INDIAN WOMAN.

[Composed 1798.—Published 1798.]

[When a Northern Indian, from sickness, is unable to continue his journey with his companions, he is left behind, covered over with deer-skins, and is supplied with water, food, and fuel, if the situation of the place will afford it. He is informed of the track which his companions intend to pursue, and if he be unable to follow, or overtake them, he perishes alone in the desert, unless he should have the good fortune to fall in with some other tribes of Indians. The females are equally, or still more, exposed to the same fate. See that very interesting work Hearne's "Journey from Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean." In the high northern latitudes, as the same writer informs us, when the northern lights vary their position in the air, they make a rustling and a crackling noise, as alluded to in the following poem.]

## I.

BEFORE I see another day,  
Oh let my body die away!  
In sleep I heard the northern gleams;  
The stars, they were among my dreams;

In rustling conflict through the skies, 5  
I heard, I saw the flashes drive,  
And yet they are upon my eyes,  
And yet I am alive;  
Before I see another day,  
Oh let my body die away ! 10

## II.

My fire is dead : it knew no pain ;  
Yet is it dead, and I remain :  
All stiff with ice the ashes lie ;  
And they are dead, and I will die.  
When I was well, I wished to live, 15  
For clothes, for warmth, for food, and fire ;  
But they to me no joy can give,  
No pleasure now, and no desire.  
Then here contented will I lie !  
Alone, I cannot fear to die. 20

## III.

Alas ! ye might have dragged me on  
Another day, a single one !  
Too soon I yielded to despair ;  
Why did ye listen to my prayer ?  
When ye were gone my limbs were 25  
stronger ;  
And oh, how grievously I rue,  
That, afterwards, a little longer,  
My friends, I did not follow you !  
For strong and without pain I lay,  
Dear friends, when ye were gone away. 30

## IV.

My Child ! they gave thee to another,  
A woman who was not thy mother.  
When from my arms my Babe they took,  
On me how strangely did he look !  
Through his whole body something ran,  
A most strange working did I see ; 36  
—As if he strove to be a man,  
That he might pull the sledge for me :  
And then he stretched his arms, how wild !  
Oh mercy ! like a helpless child. 40

## V.

My little joy ! my little pride !  
In two days more I must have died.  
Then do not weep and grieve for me ;  
I feel I must have died with thee.  
O wind, that o'er my head art flying 45

The way my friends their course did bend,  
I should not feel the pain of dying,  
Could I with thee a message send ;  
Too soon, my friends, ye went away ;  
For I had many things to say. 50

## VI.

I'll follow you across the snow ;  
Ye travel heavily and slow ;  
In spite of all my weary pain  
I'll look upon your tents again.  
—My fire is dead, and snowy white 55  
The water which beside it stood :  
The wolf has come to me to-night,  
And he has stolen away my food.  
For ever left alone am I ;  
Then wherefore should I fear to die ? 60

## VII.

Young as I am, my course is run,  
I shall not see another sun ;  
I cannot lift my limbs to know  
If they have any life or no.  
My poor forsaken Child, if I 65  
For once could have thee close to me,  
With happy heart I then would die,  
And my last thought would happy be ;  
But thou, dear Babe, art far away,  
Nor shall I see another day. 70

## XXII.

## THE LAST OF THE FLOCK.

[Composed 1798.—Published 1798.]

## I.

In distant countries have I been,  
And yet I have not often seen  
A healthy man, a man full grown,  
Weep in the public roads, alone.  
But such a one, on English ground, 5  
And in the broad highway, I met ;  
Along the broad highway he came,  
His cheeks with tears were wet :  
Sturdy he seemed, though he was sad ;  
And in his arms a Lamb he had. 10

## II.

He saw me, and he turned aside,  
As if he wished himself to hide :  
And with his coat did then essay  
To wipe those briny tears away.

I followed him, and said, "My friend, 15  
 What ails you? wherefore weep you so?"  
 —"Shame on me, Sir! this lusty Lamb,  
 He makes my tears to flow.  
 To-day I fetched him from the rock;  
 He is the last of all my flock. 20

## III.

"When I was young, a single man,  
 And after youthful follies ran,  
 Though little given to care and thought,  
 Yet, so it was, an ewe I bought;  
 And other sheep from her I raised, 25  
 As healthy sheep as you might see;  
 And then I married, and was rich  
 As I could wish to be;  
 Of sheep I numbered a full score,  
 And every year increased my store. 30

## IV.

"Year after year my stock it grew;  
 And from this one, this single ewe,  
 Full fifty comely sheep I raised,  
 As fine a flock as ever grazed!  
 Upon the Quantock hills they fed; 35  
 They thrive, and we at home did thrive:  
 —This lusty Lamb of all my store  
 Is all that is alive;  
 And now I care not if we die,  
 And perish all of poverty. 40

## V.

"Six Children, Sir! had I to feed;  
 Hard labour in a time of need!  
 My pride was tamed, and in our grief  
 I of the Parish asked relief.  
 They said, I was a wealthy man; 45  
 My sheep upon the uplands fed,  
 And it was fit that thence I took  
 Whereof to buy us bread.  
 'Do this: how can we give to you,'  
 They cried, 'what to the poor is due?' 50

## VI.

"I sold a sheep, as they had said,  
 And bought my little children bread,  
 And they were healthy with their food;  
 For me—it never did me good.  
 A woeful time it was for me, 55

To see the end of all my gains,  
 The pretty flock which I had reared  
 With all my care and pains,  
 To see it melt like snow away—  
 For me it was a woeful day. 60

## VII.

"Another still! and still another!  
 A little lamb, and then its mother!  
 It was a vein that never stopped—  
 Like blood-drops from my heart they  
 dropped.  
 Till thirty were not left alive 65  
 They dwindled, dwindled, one by one;  
 And I may say, that many a time  
 I wished they all were gone—  
 Reckless of what might come at last  
 Were but the bitter struggle past. 70

## VIII.

"To wicked deeds I was inclined,  
 And wicked fancies crossed my mind;  
 And every man I chanced to see,  
 I thought he knew some ill of me:  
 No peace, no comfort could I find, 75  
 No ease, within doors or without;  
 And crazily and wearily  
 I went my work about;  
 And oft was moved to flee from home,  
 And hide my head where wild beasts  
 roam. 80

## IX.

"Sir! 'twas a precious flock to me,  
 As dear as my own children be;  
 For daily with my growing store  
 I loved my children more and more.  
 Alas! it was an evil time; 85  
 God cursed me in my sore distress;  
 I prayed, yet every day I thought  
 I loved my children less;  
 And every week, and every day,  
 My flock it seemed to melt away. 90

## X.

"They dwindled, Sir, sad sight to see!  
 From ten to five, from five to three,  
 A lamb, a wether, and a ewe;—  
 And then at last from three to two;  
 And, of my fifty, yesterday 95

I had but only one :  
 And here it lies upon my arm,  
 Alas ! and I have none ;—  
 To-day I fetched it from the rock ;  
 It is the last of all my flock.” 100

## XXIII.

## REPENTANCE.

A PASTORAL BALLAD.

[Composed 1804.—Published 1820.]

THE fields which with covetous spirit we  
 sold,  
 Those beautiful fields, the delight of the  
 day,  
 Would have brought us more good than a  
 burthen of gold,  
 Could we but have been as contented as  
 they.

When the troublesome Tempter beset us,  
 said I, 5  
 “Let him come, with his purse proudly  
 grasped in his hand ;  
 But, Allan, be true to me, Allan,—we’ll  
 die  
 Before he shall go with an inch of the  
 land !”

There dwelt we, as happy as birds in their  
 bowers ;  
 Unfettered as bees that in gardens abide ;  
 We could do what we liked with the land,  
 it was ours ; 11  
 And for us the brook murmured that ran  
 by its side.

But now we are strangers, go early or  
 late ;  
 And often, like one overburthened with  
 sin,  
 With my hand on the latch of the half-  
 opened gate, 15  
 I look at the fields, but I cannot go in !

When I walk by the hedge on a bright  
 summer’s day,  
 Or sit in the shade of my grandfather’s  
 tree,  
 A stern face it puts on, as if ready to say,  
 “What ails you, that you must come  
 creeping to me !” 20

With our pastures about us, we could not  
 be sad ;  
 Our comfort was near if we ever were  
 crost ;  
 But the comfort, the blessings, and wealth  
 that we had,  
 We slighted them all,—and our birth-  
 right was lost.

Oh, ill-judging sire of an innocent son 25  
 Who must now be a wanderer ! but peace  
 to that strain !

Think of evening’s repose when our labour  
 was done,  
 The sabbath’s return ; and its leisure’s  
 soft chain !

And in sickness, if night had been sparing  
 of sleep,  
 How cheerful, at sunrise, the hill where I  
 stood, 30  
 Looking down on the kine, and our trea-  
 sure of sheep  
 That besprinkled the field ; ’twas like  
 youth in my blood !

Now I cleave to the house, and am dull as  
 a snail ;  
 And, oftentimes, hear the church-bell  
 with a sigh,  
 That follows the thought—We’ve no land  
 in the vale, 35  
 Save six feet of earth where our fore-  
 fathers lie !

## XXIV.

## THE

## AFFLICTION OF MARGARET—.

[Dated 1804 (W.).—Probably composed earlier  
 (1801 ?).—Published 1807.]

## I.

WHERE art thou, my beloved Son,  
 Where art thou, worse to me than dead ?  
 Oh find me, prosperous or undone !  
 Or, if the grave be now thy bed,  
 Why am I ignorant of the same  
 That I may rest ; and neither blame  
 Nor sorrow may attend thy name ?

## II.

Seven years, alas! to have received  
 No tidings of an only child;  
 To have despaired, have hoped, believed,  
 And been for evermore beguiled; 11  
 Sometimes with thoughts of very bliss!  
 I catch at them, and then I miss;  
 Was ever darkness like to this?

## III.

He was among the prime in worth, 15  
 An object beauteous to behold;  
 Well born, well bred; I sent him forth  
 Ingenuous, innocent, and bold:  
 If things ensued that wanted grace,  
 As hath been said, they were not base; 20  
 And never blush was on my face.

## IV.

Ah! little doth the young-one dream,  
 When full of play and childish cares,  
 What power is in his wildest scream,  
 Heard by his mother unawares! 25  
 He knows it not, he cannot guess:  
 Years to a mother bring distress;  
 But do not make her love the less.

## V.

Neglect me! no, I suffered long  
 From that ill thought; and, being blind,  
 Said, "Pride shall help me in my wrong:  
 Kind mother have I been, as kind 32  
 As ever breathed:" and that is true;  
 I've wet my path with tears like dew,  
 Weeping for him when no one knew. 35

## VI.

My Son, if thou be humbled, poor,  
 Hopeless of honour and of gain,  
 Oh! do not dread thy mother's door;  
 Think not of me with grief and pain:  
 I now can see with better eyes; 40  
 And worldly grandeur I despise,  
 And fortune with her gifts and lies.

## VII.

Alas! the fowls of heaven have wings,  
 And blasts of heaven will aid their flight;  
 They mount—how short a voyage brings  
 The wanderers back to their delight! 46

Chains tie us down by land and sea;  
 And wishes, vain as mine, may be  
 All that is left to comfort thee.

## VIII.

Perhaps some dungeon hears thee groan,  
 Maimed, mangled by inhuman men; 51  
 Or thou upon a desert thrown  
 Inheritest the lion's den;  
 Or hast been summoned to the deep,  
 Thou, thou and all thy mates, to keep 55  
 An incommunicable sleep.

## IX.

I look for ghosts; but none will force  
 Their way to me: 'tis falsely said  
 That there was ever intercourse  
 Between the living and the dead; 60  
 For, surely, then I should have sight  
 Of him I wait for day and night,  
 With love and longings infinite.

## X.

My apprehensions come in crowds;  
 I dread the rustling of the grass; 65  
 The very shadows of the clouds  
 Have power to shake me as they pass:  
 I question things and do not find  
 One that will answer to my mind;  
 And all the world appears unkind. 70

## XI.

Beyond participation lie  
 My troubles, and beyond relief:  
 If any chance to heave a sigh,  
 They pity me, and not my grief.  
 Then come to me, my Son, or send 75  
 Some tidings that my woes may end;  
 I have no other earthly friend!

## XXV.

## THE COTTAGER TO HER INFANT.

BY MY SISTER.

[Composed 1805.—Published 1815.]

THE days are cold, the nights are long,  
 The north-wind sings a doleful song;  
 Then hush again upon my breast;  
 All merry things are now at rest,  
 Save thee, my pretty Love! 5

The kitten sleeps upon the hearth,  
The crickets long have ceased their mirth;  
There's nothing stirring in the house  
Save one wee, hungry, nibbling mouse,  
Then why so busy thou? 10

Nay! start not at that sparkling light;  
'Tis but the moon that shines so bright  
On the window pane bedropped with  
rain:

Then little Darling! sleep again,  
And wake when it is day. 15

## XXVI.

## MATERNAL GRIEF.

[Composed 1810 (?).—Published 1842.]

DEPARTED Child! I could forget thee once  
Though at my bosom nursed; this woeful  
gain

Thy dissolution brings, that in my soul  
Is present and perpetually abides  
A shadow, never, never to be displaced 5  
By the returning substance, seen or  
touched,

Seen by mine eyes, or clasped in my  
embrace.

Absence and death how differ they! and  
how

Shall I admit that nothing can restore 9  
What one short sigh so easily removed?—

Death, life, and sleep, reality and thought,  
Assist me, God, their boundaries to  
know,

O teach me calm submission to thy Will!

The Child she mourned had overstepped  
the pale

Of Infancy, but still did breathe the air 15  
That sanctifies its confines, and partook  
Reflected beams of that celestial light  
To all the Little-ones on sinful earth  
Not unvouchsafed—a light that warmed  
and cheered

Those several qualities of heart and mind  
Which, in her own blest nature, rooted  
deep, 21

Daily before the Mother's watchful eye,  
And not hers only, their peculiar charms,  
Unfolded,—beauty, for its present self,  
And for its promises to future years, 25  
With not unfrequent rapture fondly hailed.

Have you espied upon a dewy lawn  
A pair of Leverets each provoking each  
To a continuance of their fearless sport,  
Two separate Creatures in their several  
gifts 30

Abounding, but so fashioned that, in all  
That Nature prompts them to display,  
their looks,

Their starts of motion and their fits of  
rest,

An undistinguishable style appears  
And character of gladness, as if Spring 35  
Lodged in their innocent bosoms, and the  
spirit

Of the rejoicing morning were their own?

Such union, in the lovely Girl main-  
tained

And her twin Brother, had the parent  
seen,

Ere, pouncing like a ravenous bird of  
prey, 40

Death in a moment parted them, and left  
The Mother, in her turns of anguish,  
worse

Than desolate; for oft-times from the  
sound

Of the survivor's sweetest voice (dear  
child,

He knew it not) and from his happiest  
looks, 45

Did she extract the food of self-reproach,  
As one that lived ungrateful for the stay  
By Heaven afforded to uphold her maimed  
And tottering spirit. And full oft the Boy,  
Now first acquainted with distress and  
grief, 50

Shrunk from his Mother's presence, shun-  
ned with fear

Her sad approach, and stole away to find,  
In his known haunts of joy where'er he  
might,

A more congenial object. But, as time  
Softened her pangs, and reconciled the  
child 55

To what he saw, he gradually returned,  
Like a scared Bird encouraged to renew  
A broken intercourse; and, while his eyes  
Were yet with pensive fear and gentle  
awe

Turned upon her who bore him, she  
would stoop 60

To imprint a kiss that lacked not power  
to spread  
Faint colour over both their pallid cheeks,  
And stilled his tremulous lip. Thus they  
were calmed  
And cheered; and now together breathe  
fresh air  
In open fields; and when the glare of  
day 65  
Is gone, and twilight to the Mother's  
wish  
Befriends the observance, readily they  
join  
In walks whose boundary is the lost One's  
grave,  
Which he with flowers hath planted,  
finding there  
Amusement, where the Mother does not  
miss 70  
Dear consolation, kneeling on the turf  
In prayer, yet blending with that solemn  
rite  
Of pious faith the vanities of grief;  
For such, by pitying Angels and by  
Spirits  
Transferred to regions upon which the  
clouds 75  
Of our weak nature rest not, must be  
deemed  
Those willing tears, and unforbidden  
sighs,  
And all those tokens of a cherished sor-  
row,  
Which, soothed and sweetened by the  
grace of Heaven 79  
As now it is, seems to her own fond heart  
Immortal as the love that gave it being.

## XXVII.

## THE SAILOR'S MOTHER.

[Composed March 11, 12, 1802.—Published 1807.]

ONE morning (raw it was and wet—  
A foggy day in winter time)  
A Woman on the road I met,  
Not old, though something past her  
prime:  
Majestic in her person, tall and straight;  
And like a Roman matron's was her mien  
and gait. 6

The ancient spirit is not dead;  
Old times, thought I, are breathing  
there;  
Proud was I that my country bred  
Such strength, a dignity so fair: 10  
She begged an alms, like one in poor  
estate;  
I looked at her again, nor did my pride  
abate.

When from these lofty thoughts I woke,  
"What is it," said I, "that you bear,  
Beneath the covert of your Cloak, 15  
Protected from this cold damp air?"  
She answered, soon as she the question  
heard,  
"A simple burthen, Sir, a little Singing-  
bird."

And, thus continuing, she said,  
"I had a Son, who many a day 20  
Sailed on the seas, but he is dead;  
In Denmark he was cast away:  
And I have travelled weary miles to see  
If aught which he had owned might still  
remain for me.

"The bird and cage they both were his:  
'Twas my Son's bird; and neat and 26  
trim  
He kept it: many voyages  
The singing-bird had gone with him;  
When last he sailed, he left the bird  
behind;  
From bodings, as might be, that hung  
upon his mind. 30

"He to a fellow-lodger's care  
Had left it, to be watched and fed,  
And pipe its song in safety;—there  
I found it when my Son was dead;  
And now, God help me for my little  
wit! 35  
I bear it with me, Sir;—he took so much  
delight in it."

## XXVIII.

## THE CHILDLESS FATHER.

[Composed 1800.—Published 1800.]

"UP, Timothy, up with your staff and  
away!  
Not a soul in the village this morning will  
stay;

The hare has just started from Hamilton's  
grounds,  
And Skiddaw is glad with the cry of the  
hounds."

—Of coats and of jackets grey, scarlet,  
and green, 5

On the slopes of the pastures all colours  
were seen;

With their comely blue aprons, and caps  
white as snow,

The girls on the hills made a holiday show.

Fresh sprigs of green box-wood, not six  
months before,

Filled the funeral basin<sup>1</sup> at Timothy's  
door; 10

A coffin through Timothy's threshold had  
past;

One Child did it bear, and that Child  
was his last.

Now fast up the dell came the noise and  
the fray,

The horse, and the horn, and the hark!  
hark away!

Old Timothy took up his staff, and he shut  
With a leisurely motion the door of his hut.

Perhaps to himself at that moment he said;  
"The key I must take, for my Ellen is  
dead."

But of this in my ears not a word did he  
speak;

And he went to the chase with a tear on  
his cheek. 20

### XXIX.

#### THE EMIGRANT MOTHER.

[Composed March 16, 17, 1802.—Published 1807.]

ONCE in a lonely hamlet I sojourned  
In which a Lady driven from France did  
dwell;

The big and lesser griefs with which she  
mourned

In friendship she to me would often tell.

<sup>1</sup> In several parts of the North of England, when a funeral takes place, a basin full of sprigs of box-wood is placed at the door of the house from which the coffin is taken up, and each person who attends the funeral ordinarily takes a sprig of this box-wood, and throws it into the grave of the deceased.

This Lady, dwelling upon British ground,  
Where she was childless, daily would  
repair 6

To a poor neighbouring cottage; as I  
found,

For sake of a young Child whose home  
was there.

Once having seen her clasp with fond  
embrace

This Child, I chanted to myself a lay, 10  
Endeavouring, in our English tongue, to  
trace

Such things as she unto the Babe might  
say:

And thus, from what I heard and knew,  
or guessed,

My song the workings of her heart  
expressed.

### I.

"Dear Babe, thou daughter of another, 15  
One moment let me be thy mother!

An infant's face and looks are thine  
And sure a mother's heart is mine:

Thy own dear mother's far away,  
At labour in the harvest field: 20

Thy little sister is at play;—  
What warmth, what comfort would it  
yield

To my poor heart, if thou wouldst be  
One little hour a child to me!

### II.

"Across the waters I am come, 25  
And I have left a babe at home:

A long, long way of land and sea!  
Come to me—I'm no enemy:

I am the same who at thy side  
Sate yesterday, and made a nest, 30

For thee, sweet Baby!—thou hast tried,  
Thou know'st the pillow of my breast;

Good, good art thou:—alas! to me  
Far more than I can be to thee.

### III.

"Here, little Darling, dost thou lie; 35  
An infant thou, a mother I!

Mine wilt thou be, thou hast no fears;  
Mine art thou—spite of these my tears.

Alas ! before I left the spot,  
My baby and its dwelling-place,  
The nurse said to me, 'Tears should not  
Be shed upon an infant's face,  
It was unlucky'—no, no, no;  
No truth is in them who say so!

IV.

"My own dear Little-one will sigh, 45  
Sweet Babe ! and they will let him die.  
'He pines,' they'll say, 'it is his doom,  
And you may see his hour is come.'  
Oh ! had he but thy cheerful smiles,  
Limbs stout as thine, and lips as gay, 50  
Thy looks, thy cunning, and thy wiles,  
And countenance like a summer's day,  
They would have hopes of him;—and  
then  
I should behold his face again!

V.

"'Tis gone—like dreams that we forget;  
There was a smile or two—yet—yet 56  
I can remember them, I see  
The smiles, worth all the world to me.  
Dear Baby ! I must lay thee down; 59  
Thou troublest me with strange alarms;  
Smiles hast thou, bright ones of thy own;  
I cannot keep thee in my arms;  
For they confound me;—where—where is  
That last, that sweetest smile of his?

VI.

"Oh ! how I love thee !—we will stay 65  
Together here this one half day.  
My sister's child, who bears my name,  
From France to sheltering England  
came;  
She with her mother crossed the sea;  
The babe and mother near me dwell : 70  
Yet does my yearning heart to thee  
Turn rather, though I love her well:  
Rest, little Stranger, rest thee here!  
Never was any child more dear !

VII.

"—I cannot help it; ill intent 75  
I've none, my pretty Innocent !  
I weep—I know they do thee wrong,  
These tears—and my poor idle tongue.

Oh, what a kiss was that ! my cheek  
How cold it is ! but thou art good ; 80  
Thine eyes are on me—they would speak,  
I think, to help me if they could.  
Blessings upon that soft, warm face,  
My heart again is in its place !

VIII.

"While thou art mine, my little Love, 85  
This cannot be a sorrowful grove;  
Contentment, hope, and mother's glee,  
I seem to find them all in thee:  
Here's grass to play with, here are  
flowers;  
I'll call thee by my darling's name; 90  
Thou hast, I think, a look of ours,  
Thy features seem to me the same;  
His little sister thou shalt be;  
And, when once more my home I see,  
I'll tell him many tales of Thee." 95

XXX.

VAUDRACOUR AND JULIA.

[Composed probably 1804.—Published 1820]

The following tale was written as an Episode, in  
a work from which its length may perhaps  
exclude it. The facts are true; no invention  
as to these has been exercised, as none was  
needed.

O HAPPY time of youthful lovers (thus  
My story may begin) O balmy time,  
In which a love-knot on a lady's brow  
Is fairer than the fairest star in heaven !  
To such inheritance of blessed fancy 5  
(Fancy that sports more desperately with  
minds  
Than ever fortune hath been known to do)  
The high-born Vaudracour was brought,  
by years  
Whose progress had a little overstepped  
His stripling prime. A town of small re-  
pute, 10  
Among the vine-clad mountains of Au-  
vergne,  
Was the Youth's birth-place. There he  
wooed a Maid  
Who heard the heart-felt music of his suit  
With answering vows. Plebeian was the  
stock,  
Plebeian, though ingenuous, the stock, 15

From which her graces and her honours  
 sprung :  
 And hence the father of the enamoured  
 Youth,  
 With haughty indignation, spurned the  
 thought  
 Of such alliance.—From their cradles up,  
 With but a step between their several  
 homes, 20  
 Twins had they been in pleasure; after  
 strife  
 And petty quarrels, had grown fond again;  
 Each other's advocate, each other's stay;  
 And, in their happiest moments, not  
 content,  
 If more divided than a sportive pair 25  
 Of sea-fowl, conscious both that they are  
 hovering  
 Within the eddy of a common blast,  
 Or hidden only by the concave depth  
 Of neighbouring billows from each other's  
 sight.

Thus, not without concurrence of an age  
 Unknown to memory, was an earnest  
 given 31  
 By ready nature for a life of love,  
 For endless constancy, and placid truth;  
 But whatsoever of such rare treasure lay  
 Reserved, had fate permitted, for sup-  
 port 35  
 Of their maturer years, his present mind  
 Was under fascination;—he beheld  
 A vision, and adored the thing he saw.  
 Arabian fiction never filled the world  
 With half the wonders that were wrought  
 for him. 40  
 Earth breathed in one great presence of  
 the spring;  
 Life turned the meanest of her imple-  
 ments,  
 Before his eyes, to price above all gold;  
 The house she dwelt in was a sainted  
 shrine;  
 Her chamber-window did surpass in glory  
 The portals of the dawn; all Paradise 46  
 Could, by the simple opening of a door,  
 Let itself in upon him:—pathways, walks,  
 Swarmed with enchantment, till his spirit  
 sank,  
 Surcharged, within him, overblest to move.

Beneath a sun that wakes a weary world  
 To its dull round of ordinary cares; 52  
 A man too happy for mortality!

So passed the time, till, whether through  
 effect  
 Of some unguarded moment that dis-  
 solved 55  
 Virtuous restraint—ah, speak it, think it,  
 not!  
 Deem rather that the fervent Youth, who  
 saw  
 So many bars between his present state  
 And the dear haven where he wished  
 to be  
 In honourable wedlock with his Love, 60  
 Was in his judgment tempted to decline  
 To perilous weakness, and entrust his  
 cause  
 To nature for a happy end of all;  
 Deem that by such fond hope the Youth  
 was swayed,  
 And bear with their transgression, when  
 I add 65  
 That Julia, wanting yet the name of wife,  
 Carried about her for a secret grief  
 The promise of a mother.  
 To conceal  
 The threatened shame, the parents of the  
 Maid  
 Found means to hurry her away by night,  
 And unforewarned, that in some distant  
 spot 71  
 She might remain shrouded in privacy,  
 Until the babe was born. When morning  
 came,  
 The Lover, thus bereft, stung with his loss,  
 And all uncertain whither he should turn,  
 Chafed like a wild beast in the toils; but  
 soon 76  
 Discovering traces of the fugitives,  
 Their steps he followed to the Maid's  
 retreat.  
 Easily may the sequel be divined—  
 Walks to and fro—watchings at every  
 hour; 80  
 And the fair Captive, who, whene'er she  
 may,  
 Is busy at her casement as the swallow  
 Fluttering its pinions, almost within  
 reach,

About the pendent nest, did thus espy  
Her Lover!—thence a stolen interview, 85  
Accomplished under friendly shade of  
night.

I pass the raptures of the pair;—such  
theme  
Is, by innumerable poets, touched  
In more delightful verse than skill of  
mine  
Could fashion; chiefly by that darling  
bard 90  
Who told of Juliet and her Romeo,  
And of the lark's note heard before its  
time,  
And of the streaks that laced the severing  
clouds  
In the unrelenting east.—Through all her  
courts  
The vacant city slept; the busy winds, 95  
That keep no certain intervals of rest,  
Moved not; meanwhile the galaxy dis-  
played  
Her fires, that like mysterious pulses beat  
Aloft;—momentous but uneasy bliss!  
To their full hearts the universe seemed  
hung 100  
On that brief meeting's slender filament!

They parted; and the generous Vau-  
dracour  
Reached speedily the native threshold,  
bent  
On making (so the Lovers had agreed)  
A sacrifice of birthright to attain 105  
A final portion from his father's hand;  
Which granted, Bride and Bridegroom  
then would flee  
To some remote and solitary place,  
Shady as night, and beautiful as heaven,  
Where they may live, with no one to  
behold 110  
Their happiness, or to disturb their love.  
But *now* of this no whisper; not the less,  
If ever an obtrusive word were dropped  
Touching the matter of his passion, still,  
In his stern father's hearing, Vaudracour  
Persisted openly that death alone 115  
Should abrogate his human privilege  
Divine, of swearing everlasting truth,  
Upon the altar, to the Maid he loved.

"You shall be baffled in your mad in-  
tent 120  
If there be justice in the court of France,"  
Muttered the Father.—From these words  
the Youth  
Conceived a terror; and, by night or day  
Stirred nowhere without weapons, that  
full soon 124  
Found dreadful provocation: for at night,  
When to his chamber he retired, attempt  
Was made to seize him by three armed  
men,  
Acting, in furtherance of the Father's will,  
Under a private signet of the State.  
One the rash Youth's ungovernable hand  
Slew, and as quickly to a second gave 131  
A perilous wound—he shuddered to behold  
The breathless corse; then peacefully re-  
signed  
His person to the law, was lodged in  
prison,  
And wore the fetters of a criminal. 135

Have you observed a tuft of winged seed  
That, from the dandelion's naked stalk,  
Mounted aloft, is suffered not to use  
Its natural gifts for purposes of rest,  
Driven by the autumnal whirlwind to  
and fro 140  
Through the wide element? or have you  
marked  
The heavier substance of a leaf-clad bough,  
Within the vortex of a foaming flood,  
Tormented? by such aid you may conceive  
The perturbation that ensued;—ah, no!  
Desperate the Maid—the Youth is stained  
with blood; 145  
Unmatchable on earth is their disquiet!  
Yet as the troubled seed and tortured  
bough  
Is man, subjected to despotic sway.

For him, by private influence with the  
Court, 150  
Was pardon gained, and liberty procured;  
But not without exaction of a pledge,  
Which liberty and love dispersed in air.  
He flew to her from whom they would  
divide him—  
He clove to her who could not give him  
peace— 155

Yea, his first word of greeting was,—“All  
right  
Is gone from me; my lately-towering  
hopes,  
To the least fibre of their lowest root,  
Are withered; thou no longer canst be  
mine,  
I thine—the conscience-stricken must  
not woo 160  
The unruffled Innocent,—I see thy face,  
Behold thee, and my misery is complete!”

“One, are we not?” exclaimed the  
Maiden—“One,  
For innocence and youth, for weal and  
woe?”

Then with the father’s name she coupled  
words 165  
Of vehement indignation; but the Youth  
Checked her with filial meekness; for no  
thought

Uncharitable crossed his mind, no sense  
Of hasty anger, rising in the eclipse  
Of true domestic loyalty, did e’er 170  
Find place within his bosom.—Once again  
The persevering wedge of tyranny  
Achieved their separation: and once more  
Were they united,—to be yet again  
Disparted, pitiable lot! But here 175  
A portion of the tale may well be left  
In silence, though my memory could add  
Much how the Youth, in scanty space of  
time,

Was traversed from without; much, too,  
of thoughts

That occupied his days in solitude 180  
Under privation and restraint; and what,  
Through dark and shapeless fear of things  
to come,

And what, through strong compunction  
for the past,

He suffered—breaking down in heart and  
mind!

Doomed to a third and last captivity,  
His freedom he recovered on the eve 186  
Of Julia’s travail. When the babe was  
born,

Its presence tempted him to cherish  
schemes

Of future happiness. “You shall return,

Julia,” said he, “and to your father’s  
house 190

Go with the child.—You have been  
wretched; yet

The silver shower, whose reckless burthen  
weighs

Too heavily upon the lily’s head,  
Oft leaves a saving moisture at its root.

Malice, beholding you, will melt away. 195  
Go!—’tis a town where both of us were  
born;

None will reproach you, for our truth is  
known;

And if, amid those once-bright bowers,  
our fate

Remain unpitied, pity is not in man.

With ornaments—the prettiest, nature  
yields 200

Or art can fashion, shall you deck our boy,  
And feed his countenance with your own  
sweet looks,

Till no one can resist him.—Now, even  
now,

I see him sporting on the sunny lawn;  
My father from the window sees him  
too; 205

Startled, as if some new-created thing  
Enriched the earth, or Faery of the woods  
Bounded before him;—but the unweeeting  
Child

Shall by his beauty win his grandsire’s  
heart,

So that it shall be softened, and our loves  
End happily, as they began!”

These gleams  
Appeared but seldom; oftener was he  
seen 212

Propping a pale and melancholy face  
Upon the Mother’s bosom; resting thus

His head upon one breast, while from the  
other 215

The Babe was drawing in its quiet food.  
—That pillow is no longer to be thine,

Fond Youth! that mournful solace now  
must pass

Into the list of things that cannot be!

Unwedded Julia, terror-smitten, hears  
The sentence, by her mother’s lip pro-  
nounced, 221

That dooms her to a convent.—Who shall  
tell,

Who dares report, the tidings to the lord  
Of her affections? so they blindly asked  
Who knew not to what quiet depths a  
weight 225

Of agony had pressed the Sufferer down:  
The word, by others dreaded, he can hear  
Composed and silent, without visible sign  
Of even the least emotion. Noting this,  
When the impatient object of his love 230  
Upbraided him with slackness, he re-  
turned

No answer, only took the mother's hand  
And kissed it; seemingly devoid of pain,  
Or care, that what so tenderly he pressed  
Was a dependant on the obdurate heart  
Of one who came to disunite their lives 236  
For ever—sad alternative! preferred,  
By the unbending Parents of the Maid,  
To secret 'spousals meanly disavowed.  
—So be it!

In the city he remained 240  
A season after Julia had withdrawn  
To those religious walls. He, too, de-  
parts—

Who with him?—even the senseless Little-  
one.

With that sole charge he passed the city-  
gates,

For the last time, attendant by the side  
Of a close chair, a litter, or sedan, 246  
In which the Babe was carried. To a hill,  
That rose a brief league distant from the  
town,

The dwellers in that house where he had  
lodged

Accompanied his steps, by anxious love  
Impelled;—they parted from him there,  
and stood 251

Watching below till he had disappeared  
On the hill top. His eyes he scarcely took,  
Through that journey, from the vehicle  
(Slow-moving ark of all his hopes!) that  
veiled 255

The tender infant: and at every inn,  
And under every hospitable tree  
At which the bearers halted or reposed,  
Laid him with timid care upon his knees,  
And looked, as mothers ne'er were known  
to look, 260

Upon the nursing which his arms em-  
braced.

This was the manner in which Vau-  
dracour  
Departed with his infant; and thus  
reached

His father's house, where to the innocent  
child

Admittance was denied. The young man  
spake 265

No word of indignation or reproof,  
But of his father begged, a last request,  
That a retreat might be assigned to him,  
Where in forgotten quiet he might dwell,  
With such allowance as his wants re-  
quired; 270

For wishes he had none. To a lodge that  
stood

Deep in a forest, with leave given, at  
the age

Of four-and-twenty summers he withdrew;  
And thither took with him his motherless

Babe,  
And one domestic for their common  
needs, 275

An aged woman. It consoled him here  
To attend upon the orphan, and perform  
Obsequious service to the precious child,  
Which, after a short time, by some mis-  
take

Or indiscretion of the Father, died.— 280

The Tale I follow to its last recess  
Of suffering or of peace, I know not  
which:

Theirs be the blame who caused the woe,  
not mine!

From this time forth he never shared a  
smile

With mortal creature. An Inhabitant 285  
Of that same town, in which the pair  
had left

So lively a remembrance of their griefs,  
By chance of business coming within  
reach

Of his retirement, to the forest lodge  
Repaired, but only found the matron  
there, 290

Who told him that his pains were thrown  
away,

For that her Master never uttered word  
To living thing—not even to her.—Ee-  
hold!

While they were speaking, Vaudracour  
approached ;

But seeing some one near, as on the latch  
Of the garden-gate his hand was laid, he  
shrunk— 296

And, like a shadow, glided out of view.  
Shocked at his savage aspect, from the place  
The visitor retired.

Thus lived the Youth  
Cut off from all intelligence with man, 300  
And shunning even the light of common  
day ;

Nor could the voice of Freedom, which  
through France

Full speedily resounded, public hope,  
Or personal memory of his own deep  
wrongs,

Rouse him : but in those solitary shades  
His days he wasted, an imbecile mind ! 306

### XXXI.

#### THE IDIOT BOY.

[Composed 1798.—Published 1798.]

'Tis eight o'clock,—a clear March night,  
The moon is up,—the sky is blue,  
The owl, in the moonlight air,  
Shouts from nobody knows where ;  
He lengthens out his lonely shout,  
Halloo ! halloo ! a long halloo ! 5

—Why bustle thus about your door,  
What means this bustle, Betty Foy ?  
Why are you in this mighty fret ?  
And why on horseback have you set  
Him whom you love, your Idiot Boy ? 10

Scarcely a soul is out of bed ;  
Good Betty, put him down again ;  
His lips with joy they burr at you ;  
But, Betty ! what has he to do  
With stirrup, saddle, or with rein ? 15

But Betty's bent on her intent ;  
For her good neighbour Susan Gale,  
Old Susan, she who dwells alone,  
Is sick, and makes a piteous moan,  
As if her very life would fail. 20

There's not a house within a mile,  
No hand to help them in distress ;  
Old Susan lies a-bed in pain,  
And sorely puzzled are the twain,  
For what she ails they cannot guess. 25

And Betty's husband's at the wood,  
Where by the week he doth abide,  
A woodman in the distant vale ;  
There's none to help poor Susan Gale ; 30  
What must be done ? what will betide ?

And Betty from the lane has fetched  
Her Pony, that is mild and good ;  
Whether he be in joy or pain,  
Feeding at will along the lane, 35  
Or bringing fagots from the wood.

And he is all in travelling trim,—  
And, by the moonlight, Betty Foy  
Has on the well-girt saddle set  
(The like was never heard of yet) 40  
Him whom she loves, her Idiot Boy.

And he must post without delay  
Across the bridge and through the dale,  
And by the church, and o'er the down,  
To bring a Doctor from the town, 45  
Or she will die, old Susan Gale.

There is no need of boot or spur,  
There is no need of whip or wand ;  
For Johnny has his holly-bough,  
And with a *hurly-burly* now 50  
He shakes the green bough in his hand.

And Betty o'er and o'er has told  
The Boy, who is her best delight,  
Both what to follow, what to shun,  
What do, and what to leave undone, 55  
How turn to left, and how to right.

And Betty's most especial charge,  
Was, "Johnny ! Johnny ! mind that you  
Come home again, nor stop at all,—  
Come home again, whate'er befall, 60  
My Johnny, do, I pray you, do."

To this did Johnny answer make,  
Both with his head and with his hand,  
And proudly shook the bridle too ;  
And then ! his words were not a few, 65  
Which Betty well could understand.

And now that Johnny is just going,  
Though Betty's in a mighty flurry,  
She gently pats the Pony's side,  
On which her Idiot Boy must ride, 70  
And seems no longer in a hurry.

But when the Pony moved his legs,  
Oh! then for the poor Idiot Boy!  
For joy he cannot hold the bridle,  
For joy his head and heels are idle,  
He's idle all for very joy.

75

So through the moonlight lanes they go,  
And far into the moonlight dale,  
And by the church, and o'er the down,  
To bring a Doctor from the town,  
To comfort poor old Susan Gale.

120

And, while the Pony moves his legs,  
In Johnny's left hand you may see  
The green bough motionless and dead:  
The Moon that shines above his head  
Is not more still and mute than he.

80

And Betty, now at Susan's side,  
Is in the middle of her story,  
What speedy help her Boy will bring,  
With many a most diverting thing,  
Of Johnny's wit, and Johnny's glory.

125

His heart it was so full of glee  
That, till full fifty yards were gone,  
He quite forgot his holly whip,  
And all his skill in horsemanship:  
Oh! happy, happy, happy John.

85

And Betty, still at Susan's side,  
By this time is not quite so flurried:  
Demure with porringer and plate  
She sits, as if in Susan's fate  
Her life and soul were buried.

130

And while the Mother, at the door,  
Stands fixed, her face with joy o'erflows,  
Proud of herself, and proud of him,  
She sees him in his travelling trim,  
How quietly her Johnny goes.

90

But Betty, poor good woman! she,  
You plainly in her face may read it,  
Could lend out of that moment's store  
Five years of happiness or more  
To any that might need it.

135

The silence of her Idiot Boy,  
What hopes it sends to Betty's heart!  
He's at the guide-post—he turns right;  
She watches till he's out of sight,  
And Betty will not then depart.

95

But yet I guess that now and then  
With Betty all was not so well;  
And to the road she turns her ears,  
And thence full many a sound she hears,  
Which she to Susan will not tell.

141

Burr, burr—now Johnny's lips they burr,  
As loud as any mill, or near it;  
Meek as a lamb the Pony moves,  
And Johnny makes the noise he loves,  
And Betty listens, glad to hear it.

101

Poor Susan moans, poor Susan groans;  
"As sure as there's a moon in heaven,"  
Cries Betty, "he'll be back again;  
They'll both be here—'tis almost ten—  
Both will be here before eleven."

145

Away she hies to Susan Gale:  
Her Messenger's in merry tune;  
The owlets hoot, the owlets curr,  
And Johnny's lips they burr, burr, burr,  
As on he goes beneath the moon.

106

Poor Susan moans, poor Susan groans;  
The clock gives warning for eleven;  
'Tis on the stroke—"He must be near,"  
Quoth Betty, "and will soon be here,  
As sure as there's a moon in heaven."

150

His steed and he right well agree;  
For of this Pony there's a rumour  
That, should he lose his eyes and ears,  
And should he live a thousand years,  
He never will be out of humour.

110

The clock is on the stroke of twelve,  
And Johnny is not yet in sight:  
—The Moon's in heaven, as Betty sees,  
But Betty is not quite at ease;  
And Susan has a dreadful night.

155

But then he is a horse that thinks!  
And, when he thinks, his pace is slack;  
Now, though he knows poor Johnny well,  
Yet, for his life, he cannot tell  
What he has got upon his back.

115

And Betty, half an hour ago,  
On Johnny vile reflections cast:  
"A little idle sauntering Thing!"  
With other names, an endless string;  
But now that time is gone and past.

160

And Betty's drooping at the heart,  
That happy time all past and gone,  
"How can it be he is so late?  
The Doctor, he has made him wait; 165  
Susan! they'll both be here anon."

And Susan's growing worse and worse,  
And Betty's in a sad *quandary*;  
And then there's nobody to say  
If she must go, or she must stay! 170  
—She's in a sad *quandary*.

The clock is on the stroke of one;  
But neither Doctor nor his Guide  
Appears along the moonlight road;  
There's neither horse nor man abroad, 175  
And Betty's still at Susan's side.

And Susan now begins to fear  
Of sad mischances not a few,  
That Johnny may perhaps be drowned;  
Or lost, perhaps, and never found; 180  
Which they must both for ever rue.

She prefaced half a hint of this  
With, "God forbid it should be true!"  
At the first word that Susan said  
Cried Betty, rising from the bed, 185  
"Susan, I'd gladly stay with you."

"I must be gone, I must away:  
Consider, Johnny's but half-wise;  
Susan, we must take care of him,  
If he is hurt in life or limb"— 190  
"Oh God forbid!" poor Susan cries.

"What can I do?" says Betty, going,  
"What can I do to ease your pain?  
Good Susan tell me, and I'll stay;  
I fear you're in a dreadful way, 195  
But I shall soon be back again."

"Nay, Betty, go! good Betty, go!  
There's nothing that can ease my pain."  
Then off she hies; but with a prayer,  
That God poor Susan's life would spare,  
Till she comes back again. 201

So, through the moonlight lane she goes,  
And far into the moonlight dale;  
And how she ran, and how she walked,  
And all that to herself she talked, 205  
Would surely be a tedious tale.

In high and low, above, below,  
In great and small, in round and square,  
In tree and tower was Johnny seen,  
In bush and brake, in black and green;  
'Twas Johnny, Johnny, everywhere. 211

And while she crossed the bridge, there  
came  
A thought with which her heart is sore—  
Johnny perhaps his horse forsook,  
To hunt the moon within the brook, 215  
And never will be heard of more.

Now is she high upon the down,  
Alone amid a prospect wide;  
There's neither Johnny nor his Horse  
Among the fern or in the gorse; 220  
There's neither Doctor nor his Guide.

"Oh saints! what is become of him?  
Perhaps he's climbed into an oak,  
Where he will stay till he is dead;  
Or sadly he has been misled, 225  
And joined the wandering gipsy-folk."

"Or him that wicked Pony's carried  
To the dark cave, the goblin's hall;  
Or in the castle he's pursuing  
Among the ghosts his own undoing; 230  
Or playing with the waterfall."

At poor old Susan then she railed,  
While to the town she posts away;  
"If Susan had not been so ill,  
Alas! I should have had him still, 235  
My Johnny, till my dying day."

Poor Betty, in this sad distemper,  
The Doctor's self could hardly spare:  
Unworthy things she talked, and wild;  
Even he, of cattle the most mild, 240  
The Pony had his share.

But now she's fairly in the town,  
And to the Doctor's door she hies;  
'Tis silence all on every side;  
The town so long, the town so wide, 245  
Is silent as the skies.

And now she's at the Doctor's door,  
She lifts the knocker, rap, rap, rap;  
The Doctor at the casement shows  
His glimmering eyes that peep and doze!  
And one hand rubs his old night-cap. 251

"Oh Doctor! Doctor! where's my Johnny?"

"I'm here, what is't you want with me?"

"Oh Sir! you know I'm Betty Foy,  
And I have lost my poor dear Boy, 255  
You know him—him you often see;

He's not so wise as some folks be;"  
"The devil take his wisdom!" said  
The Doctor, looking somewhat grim,  
"What, Woman! should I know of him?"  
And, grumbling, he went back to bed! 261

"O woe is me! O woe is me!  
Here will I die; here will I die;  
I thought to find my lost one here,  
But he is neither far nor near, 265  
Oh! what a wretched Mother I!"

She stops, she stands, she looks about;  
Which way to turn she cannot tell.  
Poor Betty! it would ease her pain  
If she had heart to knock again; 270  
—The clock strikes three—a dismal knell!

Then up along the town she hies,  
No wonder if her senses fail;  
This piteous news so much it shocked her,  
She quite forgot to send the Doctor, 275  
To comfort poor old Susan Gale.

And now she's high upon the down,  
And she can see a mile of road:  
"O cruel! I'm almost threescore;  
Such night as this was ne'er before, 280  
There's not a single soul abroad."

She listens, but she cannot hear  
The foot of horse, the voice of man;  
The streams with softest sound are flowing,  
The grass you almost hear it growing,  
You hear it now, if e'er you can. 286

The owlets through the long blue night  
Are shouting to each other still:  
Fond lovers! yet not quite hob nob,  
They lengthen out the tremulous sob, 290  
That echoes far from hill to hill.

Poor Betty now has lost all hope,  
Her thoughts are bent on deadly sin,  
A green-grown pond she just has past,  
And from the brink she hurries fast, 295  
Lest she should drown herself therein.

And now she sits her down and weeps;  
Such tears she never shed before;  
"Oh dear, dear Pony! my sweet joy!  
Oh carry back my Idiot Boy! 300  
And we will ne'er o'erload thee more."

A thought is come into her head:  
The Pony he is mild and good,  
And we have always used him well;  
Perhaps he's gone along the dell, 305  
And carried Johnny to the wood.

Then up she springs as if on wings;  
She thinks no more of deadly sin;  
If Betty fifty ponds should see,  
The last of all her thoughts would be 310  
To drown herself therein.

Oh Reader! now that I might tell  
What Johnny and his Horse are doing!  
What they've been doing all this time,  
Oh could I put it into rhyme, 315  
A most delightful tale pursuing!

Perhaps, and no unlikely thought!  
He with his Pony now doth roam  
The cliffs and peaks so high that are,  
To lay his hands upon a star, 320  
And in his pocket bring it home.

Perhaps he's turned himself about,  
His face unto his horse's tail,  
And, still and mute, in wonder lost,  
All silent as a horseman-ghost, 325  
He travels slowly down the vale.

And now, perhaps, is hunting sheep,  
A fierce and dreadful hunter he;  
Yon valley, now so trim and green,  
In five months' time, should he be seen,  
A desert wilderness will be! 331

Perhaps, with head and heels on fire,  
And like the very soul of evil,  
He's galloping away, away,  
And so will gallop on for aye, 335  
The bane of all that dread the devil!

I to the Muses have been bound  
These fourteen years, by strong inden-  
tures:  
O gentle Muses! let me tell  
But half of what to him befell; 340  
He surely met with strange adventures.

O gentle Muses ! is this kind ?  
 Why will ye thus my suit repel ?  
 Why of your further aid bereave me ?  
 And can ye thus unfriended leave me ; 345  
 Ye Muses ! whom I love so well ?

Who's yon, that, near the waterfall,  
 Which thunders down with headlong force,  
 Beneath the moon, yet shining fair,  
 As careless as if nothing were, 350  
 Sits upright on a feeding horse ?

Unto his horse—there feeding free,  
 He seems, I think, the rein to give ;  
 Of moon or stars he takes no heed ;  
 Of such we in romances read : 355  
 —'Tis Johnny ! Johnny ! as I live.

And that's the very Pony, too !  
 Where is she, where is Betty Foy ?  
 She hardly can sustain her fears ;  
 The roaring waterfall she hears, 360  
 And cannot find her Idiot Boy.

Your Pony's worth his weight in gold :  
 Then calm your terrors, Betty Foy !  
 She's coming from among the trees,  
 And now all full in view she sees, 365  
 Him whom she loves, her Idiot Boy.

And Betty sees the Pony too :  
 Why stand you thus, good Betty Foy ?  
 It is no goblin, 'tis no ghost,  
 'Tis he whom you so long have lost, 370  
 He whom you love, your Idiot Boy.

She looks again—her arms are up—  
 She screams—she cannot move for joy ;  
 She darts, as with a torrent's force,  
 She almost has o'erturned the Horse, 375  
 And fast she holds her Idiot Boy.

And Johnny burrs, and laughs aloud ;  
 Whether in cunning or in joy  
 I cannot tell ; but, while he laughs,  
 Betty a drunken pleasure quaffs 380  
 To hear again her Idiot Boy.

And now she's at the Pony's tail,  
 And now is at the Pony's head,—  
 On that side now, and now on this ;  
 And, almost stifled with her bliss, 385  
 A few sad tears does Betty shed.

She kisses o'er and o'er again  
 Him whom she loves, her Idiot Boy ;  
 She's happy here, is happy there,  
 She is uneasy everywhere ; 390  
 Her limbs are all alive with joy.

She pats the Pony, where or when  
 She knows not, happy Betty Foy !  
 The little Pony glad may be,  
 But he is milder far than she, 395  
 You hardly can perceive his joy.

"Oh ! Johnny, never mind the Doctor ;  
 You've done your best, and that is all :"  
 She took the reins, when this was said,  
 And gently turned the Pony's head 400  
 From the loud waterfall.

By this the stars were almost gone,  
 The moon was setting on the hill,  
 So pale you scarcely looked at her :  
 The little birds began to stir, 405  
 Though yet their tongues were still.

The Pony, Betty, and her Boy,  
 Wind slowly through the woody dale ;  
 And who is she, betimes abroad,  
 That hobbles up the steep rough road ? 410  
 Who is it, but old Susan Gale ?

Long time lay Susan lost in thought ;  
 And many dreadful fears beset her,  
 Both for her Messenger and Nurse ;  
 And, as her mind grew worse and worse, 415  
 Her body—it grew better.

She turned, she tossed herself in bed,  
 On all sides doubts and terrors met her ;  
 Point after point did she discuss ;  
 And, while her mind was fighting thus, 420  
 Her body still grew better.

"Alas ! what is become of them ?  
 These fears can never be endured ;  
 I'll to the wood."—The word scarce said,  
 Did Susan rise up from her bed, 425  
 As if by magic cured.

Away she goes up hill and down,  
 And to the wood at length is come ;  
 She spies her Friends, she shouts a greet-  
 ing ; 430  
 Oh me ! it is a merry meeting  
 As ever was in Christendom.

The owls have hardly sung their last,  
While our four travellers homeward wend;  
The owls have hooted all night long,  
And with the owls began my song, 435  
And with the owls must end.

For, while they all were travelling home,  
Cried Betty, "Tell us, Johnny, do,  
Where all this long night you have been,  
What you have heard, what you have seen:  
And, Johnny, mind you tell us true." 441  
Now Johnny all night long had heard  
The owls in tuneful concert strive;  
No doubt too he the moon had seen;  
For in the moonlight he had been 445  
From eight o'clock till five.

And thus, to Betty's question, he  
Made answer, like a traveller bold,  
(His very words I give to you,)  
"The cocks did crow to-whoo, to-whoo,  
And the sun did shine so cold!" 451  
—Thus answered Johnny in his glory,  
And that was all his travel's story.

## XXXII.

## MICHAEL.

## A PASTORAL POEM.

[Composed October 11-December 9, 1890.—  
Published 1890.]

If from the public way you turn your steps  
Up the tumultuous brook of Green-head  
Ghyll,  
You will suppose that with an upright  
path  
Your feet must struggle; in such bold  
ascent  
The pastoral mountains front you, face to  
face. 5  
But, courage! for around that boisterous  
brook  
The mountains have all opened out them-  
selves,  
And made a hidden valley of their own.  
No habitation can be seen; but they  
Who journey thither find themselves  
alone 10  
With a few sheep, with rocks and stones,  
and kites  
That overhead are sailing in the sky.  
It is in truth an utter solitude;

Nor should I have made mention of this  
Dell  
But for one object which you might  
pass by, 15  
Might see and notice not. Beside the  
brook  
Appears a straggling heap of unhewn  
stones!  
And to that simple object appertains  
A story—unenriched with strange events,  
Yet not unfit, I deem, for the fireside, 20  
Or for the summer shade. It was the first  
Of those domestic tales that spake to me  
Of Shepherds, dwellers in the valleys,  
men  
Whom I already loved;—not verily  
For their own sakes, but for the fields  
and hills 25  
Where was their occupation and abode.  
And hence this Tale, while I was yet a  
Boy  
Careless of books, yet having felt the  
power  
Of Nature, by the gentle agency  
Of natural objects, led me on to feel 30  
For passions that were not my own, and  
think  
(At random and imperfectly indeed)  
On man, the heart of man, and human life.  
Therefore, although it be a history  
Homely and rude, I will relate the same 35  
For the delight of a few natural hearts;  
And, with yet fonder feeling, for the sake  
Of youthful Poets, who among these hills  
Will be my second self when I am gone.  
  
UPON the forest-side in Grasmere Vale  
There dwelt a Shepherd, Michael was his  
name; 41  
An old man, stout of heart, and strong of  
limb.  
His bodily frame had been from youth to  
age  
Of an unusual strength: his mind was  
keen,  
Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs, 45  
And in his shepherd's calling he was  
prompt  
And watchful more than ordinary men.  
Hence had he learned the meaning of all  
winds,

Of blasts of every tone; and oftentimes,  
 When others heeded not, He heard the  
     South 50  
 Make subterraneous music, like the noise  
 Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.  
 The Shepherd, at such warning, of his  
     flock  
 Bethought him, and he to himself would  
     say,  
 "The winds are now devising work for  
     me!" 55  
 And, truly, at all times, the storm, that  
     drives  
 The traveller to a shelter, summoned him  
 Up to the mountains: he had been alone  
 Amid the heart of many thousand mists,  
 That came to him, and left him, on the  
     heights. 60  
 So lived he till his eightieth year was  
     past.  
 And grossly that man errs, who should  
     suppose  
 That the green valleys, and the streams  
     and rocks,  
 Were things indifferent to the Shepherd's  
     thoughts.  
 Fields, where with cheerful spirits he had  
     breathed 65  
 The common air; hills, which with vigor-  
     ous step  
 He had so often climbed; which had  
     impressed  
 So many incidents upon his mind  
 Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear;  
 Which, like a book, preserved the  
     memory 70  
 Of the dumb animals, whom he had  
     saved,  
 Had fed or sheltered, linking to such  
     acts  
 The certainty of honourable gain;  
 Those fields, those hills—what could they  
     less? had laid  
 Strong hold on his affections, were to  
     him 75  
 A pleasurable feeling of blind love,  
 The pleasure which there is in life itself.

His days had not been passed in single-  
 ness.

His Helpmate was a comely matron, old—

Though younger than himself full twenty  
     years. 80  
 She was a woman of a stirring life,  
 Whose heart was in her house: two wheels  
     she had  
 Of antique form; this large, for spinning  
     wool;  
 That small, for flax; and, if one wheel  
     had rest,  
 It was because the other was at work. 85  
 The Pair had but one inmate in their  
     house,  
 An only Child, who had been born to them  
 When Michael, telling o'er his years,  
     began  
 To deem that he was old,—in shepherd's  
     phrase,  
 With one foot in the grave. This only  
     Son, 90  
 With two brave sheep-dogs tried in many  
     a storm,  
 The one of an inestimable worth,  
 Made all their household. I may truly  
     say,  
 That they were as a proverb in the vale  
 For endless industry. When day was  
     gone, 95  
 And from their occupations out of doors  
 The Son and Father were come home,  
     even then,  
 Their labour did not cease; unless when  
     all  
 Turned to the cleanly supper-board, and  
     there,  
 Each with a mess of pottage and skimmed  
     milk, 100  
 Sat round the basket piled with oaten  
     cakes,  
 And their plain home-made cheese. Yet  
     when the meal  
 Was ended, Luke (for so the Son was  
     named)  
 And his old Father both betook them-  
     selves  
 To such convenient work as might employ  
 Their hands by the fire-side; perhaps to  
     card 106  
 Wool for the Housewife's spindle, or  
     repair  
 Some injury done to sickle, flail, or scythe,  
 Or other implement of house or field.

Down from the ceiling, by the chimney's edge, 110  
That in our ancient uncouth country style  
With huge and black projection overbrowed  
Large space beneath, as duly as the light  
Of day grew dim the Housewife hung a lamp;  
An aged utensil, which had performed 115  
Service beyond all others of its kind.  
Early at evening did it burn—and late,  
Surviving comrade of uncounted hours,  
Which, going by from year to year, had found,  
And left, the couple neither gay perhaps  
Nor cheerful, yet with objects and with hopes, 121  
Living a life of eager industry.  
And now, when Luke had reached his eighteenth year,  
There by the light of this old lamp they sate,  
Father and Son, while far into the night  
The Housewife plied her own peculiar work, 126  
Making the cottage through the silent hours  
Murmur as with the sound of summer flies.  
This light was famous in its neighbourhood,  
And was a public symbol of the life 130  
That thrifty Pair had lived. For, as it chanced,  
Their cottage on a plot of rising ground  
Stood single, with large prospect, north and south,  
High into Easedale, up to Dunmail-Raise,  
And westward to the village near the lake; 135  
And from this constant light, so regular,  
And so far seen, the House itself, by all  
Who dwelt within the limits of the vale,  
Both old and young, was named THE  
EVENING STAR.

Thus living on through such a length of years, 140  
The Shepherd, if he loved himself, must needs  
Have loved his Helpmate; but to Michael's heart

This son of his old age was yet more dear—  
Less from instinctive tenderness, the same  
Fond spirit that blindly works in the blood of all— 145  
Than that a child, more than all other gifts  
That earth can offer to declining man,  
Brings hope with it, and forward-looking thoughts,  
And stirrings of inquietude, when they  
By tendency of nature needs must fail. 150  
Exceeding was the love he bare to him,  
His heart and his heart's joy! For oftentimes  
Old Michael, while he was a babe in arms,  
Had done him female service, not alone  
For pastime and delight, as is the use 155  
Of fathers, but with patient mind enforced  
To acts of tenderness; and he had rocked  
His cradle, as with a woman's gentle hand.

And in a later time, ere yet the Boy  
Had put on boy's attire, did Michael love, 160  
Albeit of a stern unbending mind,  
To have the Young-one in his sight,  
when he  
Wrought in the field, or on his shepherd's stool  
Sate with a fettered sheep before him stretched  
Under the large old oak, that near his door 165  
Stood single, and, from matchless depth of shade,  
Chosen for the Shearer's covert from the sun,  
Thence in our rustic dialect was called  
The CLIPPING TREE,<sup>1</sup> a name which yet it bears.  
There, while they two were sitting in the shade, 170  
With others round them, earnest all and blithe,  
Would Michael exercise his heart with looks  
Of fond correction and reproof bestowed

<sup>1</sup> Clipping is the word used in the North of England for shearing.

Upon the Child, if he disturbed the sheep  
By catching at their legs, or with his  
shouts 175  
Scared them, while they lay still beneath  
the shears.

And when by Heaven's good grace the  
boy grew up  
A healthy Lad, and carried in his cheek  
Two steady roses that were five years old;  
Then Michael from a winter coppice cut  
With his own hand a sapling, which he  
hooped 181

With iron, making it throughout in all  
Due requisites a perfect shepherd's staff,  
And gave it to the Boy; wherewith equipt  
He as a watchman oftentimes was placed  
At gate or gap, to stem or turn the flock;  
And, to his office prematurely called, 187  
There stood the urchin, as you will divine,  
Something between a hindrance and a  
help;

And for this cause not always, I believe,  
Receiving from his Father hire of praise;  
Though nought was left undone which  
staff, or voice,  
Or looks, or threatening gestures, could  
perform.

But soon as Luke, full ten years old,  
could stand  
Against the mountain blasts; and to the  
heights, 195  
Not fearing toil, nor length of weary ways,  
He with his Father daily went, and they  
Were as companions, why should I relate  
That objects which the Shepherd loved  
before

Were dearer now? that from the Boy  
there came 200  
Feelings and emanations—things which  
were  
Light to the sun and music to the wind;  
And that the old Man's heart seemed  
born again?

Thus in his Father's sight the Boy  
grew up:  
And now, when he had reached his eigh-  
teenth year, 205  
He was his comfort and his daily hope.

While in this sort the simple household  
lived

From day to day, to Michael's ear there  
came

Distressful tidings. Long before the time  
Of which I speak, the Shepherd had been  
bound 210

In surety for his brother's son, a man  
Of an industrious life, and ample means;  
But unforeseen misfortunes suddenly  
Had prest upon him; and old Michael  
now

Was summoned to discharge the for-  
feiture, 215

A grievous penalty, but little less  
Than half his substance. This unlooked-  
for claim,

At the first hearing, for a moment took  
More hope out of his life than he sup-  
posed

That any old man ever could have lost. 220  
As soon as he had armed himself with  
strength

To look his trouble in the face, it seemed  
The Shepherd's sole resource to sell at  
once

A portion of his patrimonial fields.  
Such was his first resolve; he thought  
again, 225

And his heart failed him. "Isabel," said  
he,

Two evenings after he had heard the  
news,

"I have been toiling more than seventy  
years,

And in the open sunshine of God's love  
Have we all lived; yet, if these fields  
of ours 230

Should pass into a stranger's hand, I think  
That I could not lie quiet in my grave.

Our lot is a hard lot; the sun himself  
Has scarcely been more diligent than I;

And I have lived to be a fool at last 235  
To my own family. An evil man

That was, and made an evil choice, if he  
Were false to us; and, if he were not false,  
There are ten thousand to whom loss like  
this

Had been no sorrow. I forgive him;—  
but 240

'Twere better to be dumb than to talk thus.

When I began, my purpose was to  
speak

Of remedies and of a cheerful hope.

Our Luke shall leave us, Isabel; the land  
Shall not go from us, and it shall be  
free; 245

He shall possess it, free as is the wind  
That passes over it. We have, thou  
know'st,

Another kinsman—he will be our friend  
In this distress. He is a prosperous man,  
Thriving in trade—and Luke to him  
shall go. 250

And with his kinsman's help and his own  
thrift

He quickly will repair this loss, and then  
He may return to us. If here he stay,  
What can be done? Where every one is  
poor,

What can be gained?"

At this the old Man paused, 255  
And Isabel sat silent, for her mind

Was busy, looking back into past times.  
There's Richard Bateman, thought she to  
herself,

He was a parish-boy—at the church-door  
They made a gathering for him, shillings,  
pence, 260

And halfpennies, wherewith the neigh-  
bours bought

A basket, which they filled with pedlar's  
wares;

And, with this basket on his arm, the lad  
Went up to London, found a master there,  
Who, out of many, chose the trusty boy  
To go and overlook his merchandise 265  
Beyond the seas; where he grew won-  
drous rich,

And left estates and monies to the poor,  
And, at his birth-place, built a chapel  
floored

With marble, which he sent from foreign  
lands. 270

These thoughts, and many others of like  
sort,

Passed quickly through the mind of  
Isabel,

And her face brightened. "The old Man  
was glad,

And thus resumed:—"Well, Isabel! this  
scheme

These two days has been meat and drink  
to me. 275

Far more than we have lost is left us yet.

We have enough—I wish indeed that I  
Were younger;—but this hope is a good  
hope.

Make ready Luke's best garments, of the  
best

Buy for him more, and let us send him  
forth 280

To-morrow, or the next day, or to-night:  
If he *could* go, the Boy should go to-  
night."

Here Michael ceased, and to the fields  
went forth

With a light heart. The Housewife for  
five days

Was restless morn and night, and all day  
long 285

Wrought on with her best fingers to  
prepare

Things needful for the journey of her son.  
But Isabel was glad when Sunday came

To stop her in her work: for, when she lay  
By Michael's side, she through the last  
two nights 290

Heard him, how he was troubled in his  
sleep:

And when they rose at morning she  
could see

That all his hopes were gone. That day  
at noon

She said to Luke, while they two by  
themselves

Were sitting at the door, "Thou must  
not go: 295

We have no other Child but thee to lose,  
None to remember—do not go away,

For if thou leave thy Father he will die."  
The Youth made answer with a jocund  
voice;

And Isabel, when she had told her fears,  
Recovered heart. That evening her best  
fare 301

Did she bring forth, and all together sat  
Like happy people round a Christmas fire.

With daylight Isabel resumed her work;  
And all the ensuing week the house  
appeared 305

As cheerful as a grove in Spring: at length  
The expected letter from their kinsman  
came,

With kind assurances that he would do  
His utmost for the welfare of the Boy;  
To which, requests were added, that  
forthwith 310

He might be sent to him. Ten times or  
more

The letter was read over; Isabel  
Went forth to show it to the neighbours  
round;

Nor was there at that time on English land  
A prouder heart than Luke's. When  
Isabel 315

Had to her house returned, the old Man  
said,

"He shall depart to-morrow." To this  
word

The Housewife answered, talking much  
of things

Which, if at such short notice he should go,  
Would surely be forgotten. But at length  
She gave consent, and Michael was at  
ease. 321

Near the tumultuous brook of Green-  
head Ghyll,

In that deep valley, Michael had designed  
To build a Sheep-fold; and, before he  
heard

The tidings of his melancholy loss, 325  
For this same purpose he had gathered up  
A heap of stones, which by the streamlet's  
edge

Lay thrown together, ready for the work.  
With Luke that evening thitherward he  
walked:

And soon as they had reached the place  
he stopped, 330

And thus the old Man spake to him:—  
"My son,

To-morrow thou wilt leave me: with full  
heart

I look upon thee, for thou art the same  
That wert a promise to me ere thy birth,  
And all thy life hast been my daily joy.  
I will relate to thee some little part 336  
Of our two histories; 'twill do thee good  
When thou art from me, even if I should  
touch

On things thou canst not know of.—

After thou  
First cam'st into the world—as oft befalls  
To new-born infants—thou didst sleep  
away 341

Two days, and blessings from thy Father's  
tongue

Then fell upon thee. Day by day passed  
on,

And still I loved thee with increasing  
love.

Never to living ear came sweeter sounds  
Than when I heard thee by our own fire-  
side 346

First uttering, without words, a natural  
tune;

While thou, a feeding babe, didst in thy  
joy

Sing at thy Mother's breast. Month  
followed month,

And in the open fields my life was passed  
And on the mountains; else I think that  
thou 351

Hadst been brought up upon thy Father's  
knees.

But we were playmates, Luke: among  
these hills,

As well thou knowest, in us the old and  
young

Have played together, nor with me didst  
thou 355

Lack any pleasure which a boy can know.<sup>3</sup>  
Luke had a manly heart; but at these  
words

He sobbed aloud. The old Man grasped  
his hand,

And said, "Nay, do not take it so—I see  
That these are things of which I need not  
speak. 360

—Even to the utmost I have been to thee  
A kind and a good Father: and herein

I but repay a gift which I myself  
Received at others' hands; for, though  
now old

Beyond the common life of man, I still 365  
Remember them who loved me in my  
youth.

Both of them sleep together: here they  
lived,

As all their Forefathers had done; and,  
when

At length their time was come, they were  
not loth

To give their bodies to the family mould.  
I wished that thou shouldst live the life  
they lived,

But 'tis a long time to look back, my  
Son,

And see so little gain from threescore  
years.

These fields were burthened when they  
came to me;

Till I was forty years of age, not more  
Than half of my inheritance was mine.

I toiled and toiled; God blessed me in  
my work,

And till these three weeks past the land  
was free.

—It looks as if it never could endure  
Another Master. Heaven forgive me,

Luke,  
If I judge ill for thee, but it seems good  
That thou shouldst go."

At this the old Man paused;

Then, pointing to the stones near which  
they stood,

Thus, after a short silence, he resumed:  
"This was a work for us; and now, my

Son,  
It is a work for me. But, lay one stone—

Here, lay it for me, Luke, with thine own  
hands.

Nay, Boy, be of good hope;—we both  
may live

To see a better day. At eighty-four  
I still am strong and hale;—do thou thy

part;  
I will do mine.—I will begin again

With many tasks that were resigned to  
thee:

Up to the heights, and in among the  
storms,

Will I without thee go again, and do  
All works which I was wont to do alone,

Before I knew thy face.—Heaven bless  
thee, Boy!

Thy heart these two weeks has been beat-  
ing fast

With many hopes; it should be so—yes—  
yes—

I knew that thou couldst never have a  
wish

To leave me, Luke: thou hast been bound  
to me

Only by links of love: when thou art  
gone,

What will be left to us!—But I forget  
My purposes. Lay now the corner-stone,

As I requested; and hereafter, Luke,  
When thou art gone away, should evil

men  
Be thy companions, think of me, my Son,

And of this moment; hither turn thy  
thoughts,

And God will strengthen thee: amid all  
fear

And all temptation, Luke, I pray that  
thou

May'st bear in mind the life thy Fathers  
lived,

Who, being innocent, did for that cause  
Bestir them in good deeds. Now, fare

thee well—  
When thou return'st, thou in this place

wilt see  
A work which is not here: a covenant

'Twill be between us; but, whatever fate  
Befall thee, I shall love thee to the last,

And bear thy memory with me to the  
grave."

The Shepherd ended here; and Luke  
stooped down,

And, as his Father had requested, laid  
The first stone of the Sheep-fold. At the

sight  
The old Man's grief broke from him; to

his heart  
He pressed his Son, he kissed him and

wept;  
And to the house together they returned.

—Hushed was that House in peace, or  
seeming peace,

Ere the night fell:—with morrow's dawn  
the Boy

Began his journey, and, when he had  
reached

The public way, he put on a bold face;  
And all the neighbours, as he passed their

doors,  
Came forth with wishes and with farewell

prayers,  
That followed him till he was out of sight.

A good report did from their Kinsman  
come,  
Of Luke and his well-doing: and the Boy  
Wrote loving letters, full of wondrous  
news,  
Which, as the Housewife phrased it, were  
throughout 434  
"The prettiest letters that were ever seen."  
Both parents read them with rejoicing  
hearts.  
So, many months passed on: and once  
again  
The Shepherd went about his daily work  
With confident and cheerful thoughts;  
and now  
Sometimes when he could find a leisure  
hour 440  
He to that valley took his way, and there  
Wrought at the Sheep-fold. Meantime  
Luke began  
To slacken in his duty; and, at length,  
He in the dissolute city gave himself  
To evil courses: ignominy and shame 445  
Fell on him, so that he was driven at last  
To seek a hiding-place beyond the seas.

There is a comfort in the strength of  
love;  
'Twill make a thing endurable, which else  
Would overset the brain, or break the  
heart: 450  
I have conversed with more than one who  
well  
Remember the old Man, and what he was  
Years after he had heard this heavy news.  
His bodily frame had been from youth to  
age  
Of an unusual strength. Among the rocks  
He went, and still looked up to sun and  
cloud, 456  
And listened to the wind; and, as before,  
Performed all kinds of labour for his  
sheep,  
And for the land, his small inheritance.  
And to that hollow dell from time to  
time 460  
Did he repair, to build the Fold of which  
His flock had need. 'Tis not forgotten  
yet  
The pity which was then in every heart  
For the old Man—and 'tis believed by all

That many and many a day he thither went,  
And never lifted up a single stone. 466

There, by the Sheep-fold, sometimes  
was he seen  
Sitting alone, or with his faithful Dog,  
Then old, beside him, lying at his feet.  
The length of full seven years, from time  
to time, 470  
He at the building of this Sheep-fold  
wrought,  
And left the work unfinished when he  
died.  
Three years, or little more, did Isabel  
Survive her Husband: at her death the  
estate  
Was sold, and went into a stranger's  
hand. 475  
The Cottage which was named the EVEN-  
ING STAR  
Is gone—the ploughshare has been through  
the ground  
On which it stood; great changes have  
been wrought  
In all the neighbourhood:—yet the oak  
is left  
That grew beside their door; and the  
remains 480  
Of the unfinished Sheep-fold may be seen  
Beside the boisterous brook of Green-  
head Ghyll.

## XXXIII.

THE WIDOW ON WINDERMERE  
SIDE.

[Composed 1837 (?).—Published 1842.]

## I.

How beautiful when up a lofty height  
Honour ascends among the humblest  
poor,  
And feeling sinks as deep! See there the  
door  
Of One, a Widow, left beneath a weight  
Of blameless debt. On evil Fortune's  
spite 5  
She wasted no complaint, but strove to  
make  
A just repayment, both for conscience-  
sake  
And that herself and hers should stand  
upright

In the world's eye. Her work when day-  
light failed  
Paused not, and through the depth of  
night she kept 10  
Such earnest vigils, that belief prevailed  
With some, the noble Creature never  
slept;  
But, one by one, the hand of death as-  
sailed  
Her children from her inmost heart be-  
wept.

## II.

The Mother mourned, nor ceased her  
tears to flow, 15  
Till a winter's noon-day placed her buried  
Son  
Before her eyes, last child of many gone—  
His raiment of angelic white, and lo!  
His very feet bright as the dazzling snow  
Which they are touching; yea far brighter,  
even 20  
As that which comes, or seems to come,  
from heaven,  
Surpasses aught these elements can show.  
Much she rejoiced, trusting that from  
that hour  
Whate'er befell she could not grieve or  
pine;  
But the Transfigured, in and out of season,  
Appeared, and spiritual presence gained  
a power 25  
Over material forms that mastered reason.  
Oh, gracious Heaven, in pity make her  
thine!

## III.

But why that prayer? as if to her could  
come  
No good but by the way that leads to  
bliss 30  
Through Death,—so judging we should  
judge amiss.  
Since reason failed want is her threatened  
doom,  
Yet frequent transports mitigate the  
gloom:  
Nor of those maniacs is she one that kiss  
The air or laugh upon a precipice; 35  
No, passing through strange sufferings  
toward the tomb,

She smiles as if a martyr's crown were  
won:  
Oft, when light breaks through clouds or  
waving trees,  
With outspread arms and fallen upon her  
knees  
The Mother hails in her descending Son  
An Angel, and in earthly ecstasies 41  
Her own angelic glory seems begun.

## XXXIV.

## THE ARMENIAN LADY'S LOVE.

[Composed 1820.—Published 1835.]

[The subject of the following poem is from the  
Orlandus of the author's friend, Kenelm Henry  
Digby: and the liberty is taken of inscribing it  
to him as an acknowledgment, however unwor-  
thy, of pleasure and instruction derived from his  
numerous and valuable writings, illustrative of  
the piety and chivalry of the olden time.]

## I.

You have heard "a Spanish Lady  
How she wooed an English man;"<sup>1</sup>  
Hear now of a fair Armenian,  
Daughter of the proud Soldan;  
How she loved a Christian Slave, and  
told her pain 5  
By word, look, deed, with hope that he  
might love again.

## II.

"Pluck that rose, it moves my liking,"  
Said she, lifting up her veil;  
"Pluck it for me, gentle gardener,  
Ere it wither and grow pale." 10  
"Princess fair, I till the ground, but may  
not take  
From twig or bed an humbler flower, even  
for your sake!"

## III.

"Grieved am I, submissive Christian!  
To behold thy captive state;  
Women, in your land, may pity 15  
(May they not?) the unfortunate."

<sup>1</sup> See in Percy's Reliques that fine old ballad,  
"The Spanish Lady's Love;" from which Poem  
the form of stanza, as suitable to dialogue, is  
adopted.

"Yes, kind Lady! otherwise man could  
not bear  
Life, which to every one that breathes is  
full of care."

## IV.

"Worse than idle is compassion  
If it end in tears and sighs; 20  
Thee from bondage would I rescue  
And from vile indignities;  
Nurtured, as thy mien bespeaks, in high  
degree,  
Look up—and help a hand that longs to  
set thee free."

## V.

"Lady! dread the wish, nor venture 25  
In such peril to engage;  
Think how it would stir against you  
Your most loving father's rage:  
Sad deliverance would it be, and yoked  
with shame,  
Should troubles overflow on her from  
whom it came." 30

## VI.

"Generous Frank! the just in effort  
Are of inward peace secure:  
Hardships for the brave encountered  
Even the feeblest may endure:  
If almighty grace through me thy chains  
unbind, 35  
My father for slave's work may seek a  
slave in mind."

## VII.

"Princess, at this burst of goodness,  
My long-frozen heart grows warm!"  
"Yet you make all courage fruitless,  
Me to save from chance of harm: 40  
Leading such companion I that gilded  
dome,  
You minarets, would gladly leave for his  
first home."

## VIII.

"Feeling tunes your voice, fair Princess!  
And your brow is free from scorn,  
Else these words would come like  
mockery,  
Sharper than the pointed thorn." 45

"Whence the undeserved mistrust? Too  
wide apart  
Our faith hath been,—O would that eyes  
could see the heart!"

## IX.

"Tempt me not, I pray; my doom is  
These base implements to wield; 50  
Rusty lance, I ne'er shall grasp thee,  
Ne'er assail my cobwebbed shield!  
Never see my native land, nor castle  
towers,  
Nor Her who thinking of me there counts  
widowed hours."

## X.

"Prisoner! pardon youthful fancies, 55  
Wedded? If you can, say no!  
Blessed is and be your consort;  
Hopes I cherished—let them go!  
Handmaid's privilege would leave my  
purpose free,  
Without another link to my felicity." 60

## XI.

"Wedded love with loyal Christians,  
Lady, is a mystery rare;  
Body, heart, and soul in union,  
Make one being of a pair."  
"Humble love in me would look for no  
return, 65  
Soft as a guiding star that cheers, but  
cannot burn."

## XII.

"Gracious Allah! by such title  
Do I dare to thank the God,  
Him who thus exalts thy spirit,  
Flower of an unchristian sod! 70  
Or hast thou put off wings which thou in  
heaven dost wear?  
What have I seen, and heard, or dreamt?  
where am I? where?"

## XIII.

Here broke off the dangerous converse:  
Less impassioned words might tell  
How the pair escaped together, 75  
Tears not wanting, nor a knell  
Of sorrow in her heart while through her  
father's door,  
And from her narrow world, she passed  
for evermore.

## XIV.

But affections higher, holier,  
 Urged her steps; she shrunk from  
 trust 80  
 In a sensual creed that trampled  
 Woman's birthright into dust.  
 Little be the wonder then, the blame be  
 none,  
 If she, a timid Maid, hath put such bold-  
 ness on.

## XV.

Judge both Fugitives with knowledge:  
 In those old romantic days 86  
 Mighty were the soul's commandments  
 To support, restrain, or raise.  
 Foes might hang upon their path, snakes  
 rustle near,  
 But nothing from their inward selves had  
 they to fear. 90

## XVI.

Thought infirm ne'er came between  
 them,  
 Whether printing desert sands  
 With accordant steps, or gathering  
 Forest-fruit with social hands;  
 Or whispering like two reeds that in the  
 cold moonbeam 95  
 Bend with the breeze their heads, beside  
 a crystal stream.

## XVII.

On a friendly deck reposing  
 They at length for Venice steer;  
 There, when they had closed their  
 voyage,  
 One, who daily on the pier 100  
 Watched for tidings from the East, be-  
 held his Lord,  
 Fell down and clasped his knees for joy,  
 not uttering word.

## XVIII.

Mutual was the sudden transport;  
 Breathless questions followed fast,  
 Years contracting to a moment, 105  
 Each word greedier than the last;  
 "Hie thee to the Countess, friend! return  
 with speed,  
 And of this Stranger speak by whom her  
 lord was freed.

## XIX.

"Say that I, who might have languished,  
 Drooped and pined till life was spent,  
 Now before the gates of Stolberg 111  
 My Deliverer would present  
 For a crowning recompense, the precious  
 grace  
 Of her who in my heart still holds her  
 ancient place.

## XX.

"Make it known that my Companion 115  
 Is of royal eastern blood,  
 Thirsting after all perfection,  
 Innocent, and meek, and good,  
 Though with misbelievers bred; but that  
 dark night  
 Will holy Church disperse by beams of  
 gospel-light." 120

## XXI.

Swiftly went that grey-haired Servant,  
 Soon returned a trusty Page  
 Charged with greetings, benedictions,  
 Thanks and praises, each a gage  
 For a sunny thought to cheer the Stran-  
 ger's way, 125  
 Her virtuous scruples to remove, her fears  
 allay.

## XXII.

And how blest the Reunited,  
 While beneath their castle-walls  
 Runs a deafening noise of welcome!—  
 Blest, though every tear that falls 130  
 Doth in its silence of past sorrow tell,  
 And makes a meeting seem most like a  
 dear farewell.

## XXIII.

Through a haze of human nature,  
 Glorified by heavenly light,  
 Looked the beautiful Deliverer 135  
 On that overpowering sight,  
 While across her virgin cheek pure blushes  
 strayed,  
 For every tender sacrifice her heart had  
 made.

## XXIV.

On the ground the weeping Countess  
 Kneelt and kissed the Stranger's hand;  
 Act of soul-devoted homage, 141  
 Pledge of an eternal band:  
 Nor did aught of future days that kiss  
 belie,  
 Which, with a generous shout, the crowd  
 did ratify.

## XXV.

Constant to the fair Armenian, 145  
 Gentle pleasures round her moved,  
 Like a tutelary spirit  
 Reverenced, like a sister loved.  
 Christian meekness smoothed for all the  
 path of life,  
 Who, loving most, should wiseliest love,  
 their only strife. 150

## XXVI.

Mute memento of that union  
 In a Saxon church survives,  
 Where a cross-legged Knight lies sculptured  
 As between two wedded Wives—  
 Figures with armorial signs of race and  
 birth, 155  
 And the vain rank the pilgrims bore  
 while yet on earth.

## XXXV.

## LOVING AND LIKING:

## IRREGULAR VERSES

## ADDRESSED TO A CHILD.

## (BY MY SISTER.)

[Composed 1832.—Published 1835.]

THERE'S more in words than I can teach:  
 Yet listen, Child!—I would not preach;  
 But only give some plain directions  
 To guide your speech and your affections.  
 Say not you *love* a roasted fowl, 5  
 But you may love a screaming owl,  
 And, if you can, the unwieldy toad  
 That crawls from his secure abode  
 Within the mossy garden wall  
 When evening dews begin to fall. 10

Oh! mark the beauty of his eye:  
 What wonders in that circle lie!  
 So clear, so bright, our fathers said  
 He wears a jewel in his head!  
 And when, upon some showery day, 15  
 Into a path or public way  
 A frog leaps out from bordering grass,  
 Startling the timid as they pass,  
 Do you observe him, and endeavour  
 To take the intruder into favour; 20  
 Learning from him to find a reason  
 For a light heart in a dull season.  
 And you may love him in the pool,  
 That is for him a happy school,  
 In which he swims as taught by nature, 25  
 Fit pattern for a human creature,  
 Glancing amid the water bright,  
 And sending upward sparkling light.

Nor blush if o'er your heart be stealing  
 A love for things that have no feeling: 30  
 The spring's first rose by you espied,  
 May fill your breast with joyful pride;  
 And you may love the strawberry-flower,  
 And love the strawberry in its bower;  
 But when the fruit, so often praised 35  
 For beauty, to your lip is raised,  
 Say not you *love* the delicate treat,  
 But *like* it, enjoy it, and thankfully eat.

Long may you love your pensioner  
 mouse,  
 Though one of a tribe that torment the  
 house: 40  
 Nor dislike for her cruel sport the cat  
 Deadly foe both of mouse and rat;  
 Remember she follows the law of her kind,  
 And Instinct is neither wayward nor  
 blind.  
 Then think of her beautiful gliding form,  
 Her tread that would scarcely crush a  
 worm, 46  
 And her soothing song by the winter fire,  
 Soft as the dying throb of the lyre.

I would not circumscribe your love:  
 It may soar with the eagle and brood with  
 the dove, 50  
 May pierce the earth with the patient  
 mole,  
 Or track the hedgehog to his hole.  
 Loving and liking are the solace of life, 10

Rock the cradle of joy, smooth the death-bed of strife.

You love your father and your mother, 55  
Your grown-up and your baby brother;  
You love your sister and your friends,  
And countless blessings which God sends:  
And while these right affections play,  
You *live* each moment of your day; 60  
They lead you on to full content,  
And likings fresh and innocent,  
That store the mind, the memory feed,  
And prompt to many a gentle deed:  
But *likings* come, and pass away; 65  
'Tis *love* that remains till our latest day:  
Our heavenward guide is holy love,  
And will be our bliss with saints above.

## XXXVI.

## FAREWELL LINES.

[Composed 1828 (?).—Published 1842.]

"High bliss is only for a higher state,"  
But, surely, if severe afflictions borne  
With patience merit the reward of peace,  
Peace ye deserve; and may the solid good,  
Sought by a wise though late exchange,  
and here 5  
With bounteous hand beneath a cottage-  
roof  
To you accorded, never be withdrawn,  
Nor for the world's best promises re-  
nounced.  
Most soothing was it for a welcome  
Friend,  
Fresh from the crowded city, to behold 10  
That lonely union, privacy so deep,  
Such calm employments, such entire con-  
tent.  
So when the rain is over, the storm laid,  
A pair of herons oft-times have I seen,  
Upon a rocky islet, side by side, 15  
Drying their feathers in the sun, at ease;  
And so, when night with grateful gloom  
had fallen,  
Two glow-worms in such nearness that  
they shared,  
As seemed, their soft self-satisfying light,  
Each with the other, on the dewy ground,  
Where He that made them blesses their  
repose.— 21

When wandering among lakes and hills  
I note,

Once more, those creatures thus by nature  
paired,  
And guarded in their tranquil state of  
life,  
Even, as your happy presence to my mind  
Their union brought, will they repay the  
debt, 25  
And send a thankful spirit back to you,  
With hope that we, dear Friends! shall  
meet again.

## XXXVII.

## THE REDBREAST.

(SUGGESTED IN A WESTMORELAND COTTAGE.)

[Composed 1834.—Published 1835.]

DRIVEN in by Autumn's sharpening air  
From half-stripped woods and pastures  
bare,

Brisk Robin seeks a kindlier home:  
Not like a beggar is he come,  
But enters as a looked-for guest, 5  
Confiding in his ruddy breast,  
As if it were a natural shield  
Charged with a blazon on the field,  
Due to that good and pious deed  
Of which we in the Ballad read. 10  
But pensive fancies putting by,  
And wild-wood sorrows, speedily  
He plays the expert ventriloquist;  
And, caught by glimpses now—now  
missed,  
Puzzles the listener with a doubt 15  
If the soft voice he throws about  
Comes from within doors or without!  
Was ever such a sweet confusion,  
Sustained by delicate illusion?  
He's at your elbow—to your feeling 20  
The notes are from the floor or ceiling;  
And there's a riddle to be guessed,  
Till you have marked his heaving chest,  
And busy throat whose sink and swell  
Betray the Elf that loves to dwell 25  
In Robin's bosom, as a chosen cell.

Heart-pleased we smile upon the Bird  
If seen, and with like pleasure stirred  
Commend him, when he's only heard.  
But small and fugitive our gain 30

Compared with *hers* who long hath lain,  
 With languid limbs and patient head  
 Reposing on a lone sick-bed;  
 Where now she daily hears a strain  
 That cheats her of too busy cares, 35  
 Eases her pain, and helps her prayers.  
 And who but this dear Bird beguiled  
 The fever of that pale-faced Child;  
 Now cooling, with his passing wing,  
 Her forehead, like a breeze of Spring; 40  
 Recalling now, with descant soft  
 Shed round her pillow from aloft,  
 Sweet thoughts of angels hovering nigh,  
 And the invisible sympathy  
 Of "Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and  
 John, 45  
 Blessing the bed she lies upon?"<sup>1</sup>  
 And sometimes, just as listening ends  
 In slumber, with the cadence blends  
 A dream of that low-warbled hymn  
 Which old folk, fondly pleased to trim 50  
 Lamps of faith, now burning dim,  
 Say that the Cherubs carved in stone,  
 When clouds gave way at dead of night  
 And the ancient church was filled with  
 light,  
 Used to sing in heavenly tone, 55  
 Above and round the sacred places  
 They guard, with winged baby-faces.

Thrice happy Creature! in all lands  
 Nurtured by hospitable hands:  
 Free entrance to this cot has he, 60  
 Entrance and exit both *yet* free;  
 And when the keen unruffled weather,  
 That thus brings man and bird together,  
 Shall with its pleasantness be past,  
 And casement closed and door made fast,  
 To keep at bay the howling blast, 66  
*He* needs not fear the season's rage,  
 For the whole house is Robin's cage.  
 Whether the bird flit here or there,  
 O'er table *lilt*, or perch on chair, 70  
 Though some may frown and make a  
 stir,

<sup>1</sup> The words—

"Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and John,  
 Bless the bed that I lie on,"

are part of a child's prayer, still in general use  
 through the northern counties.

To scare him as a trespasser,  
 And he belike will flinch or start,  
 Good friends he has to take his part;  
 One chiefly, who with voice and look 75  
 Pleads for him from the chimney-nook,  
 Where sits the Dame, and wears away  
 Her long and vacant holiday;  
 With images about her heart,  
 Reflected from the years gone by, 80  
 On human nature's second infancy.

### XXXVIII.

#### HER EYES ARE WILD.

[Composed 1798.—Published 1798.]

##### I.

HER eyes are wild, her head is bare,  
 The sun has burnt her coal-black hair;  
 Her eyebrows have a rusty stain,  
 And she came far from over the main.  
 She has a baby on her arm, 5  
 Or else she were alone:  
 And underneath the hay-stack warm,  
 And on the greenwood stone,  
 She talked and sung the woods among,  
 And it was in the English tongue. 10

##### II.

"Sweet babe! they say that I am mad,  
 But nay, my heart is far too glad;  
 And I am happy when I sing  
 Full many a sad and doleful thing:  
 Then, lovely baby, do not fear! 15  
 I pray thee have no fear of me;  
 But safe as in a cradle, here  
 My lovely baby! thou shalt be:  
 To thee I know too much I owe;  
 I cannot work thee any woe. 20

##### III.

"A fire was once within my brain;  
 And in my head a dull, dull pain;  
 And fiendish faces, one, two, three,  
 Hung at my breast, and pulled at me;  
 But then there came a sight of joy; 25  
 It came at once to do me good;  
 I waked, and saw my little boy,  
 My little boy of flesh and blood;

Oh joy for me that sight to see!  
For he was here, and only he.

30

## IV.

"Suck, little babe, oh suck again!  
It cools my blood; it cools my brain;  
Thy lips I feel them, baby! they  
Draw from my heart the pain away.  
Oh! press me with thy little hand;  
It loosens something at my chest;  
About that tight and deadly band  
I feel thy little fingers prest.  
The breeze I see is in the tree:  
It comes to cool my babe and me.

35

40

## V.

"Oh! love me, love me, little boy!  
Thou art thy mother's only joy;  
And do not dread the waves below,  
When o'er the sea-rock's edge we go;  
The high crag cannot work me harm,  
Nor leaping torrents when they howl;  
The babe I carry on my arm,  
He saves for me my precious soul;  
Then happy lie; for blest am I;  
Without me my sweet babe would die.

45

50

## VI.

"Then do not fear, my boy! for thee  
Bold as a lion will I be;  
And I will always be thy guide,  
Through hollow snows and rivers wide.  
I'll build an Indian bower; I know  
The leaves that make the softest bed:  
And if from me thou wilt not go,  
But still be true till I am dead,  
My pretty thing! then thou shalt sing  
As merry as the birds in spring.

55

60

## VIL

"Thy father cares not for my breast,  
'Tis thine, sweet baby, there to rest;  
'Tis all thine own!—and if its hue  
Be changed, that was so fair to view,

'Tis fair enough for thee, my dove!  
My beauty, little child, is flown,  
But thou wilt live with me in love;  
And what if my poor cheek be brown?  
'Tis well for me thou canst not see  
How pale and wan it else would be.

65

70

## VIII.

"Dread not their taunts, my little Life;  
I am thy father's wedded wife;  
And underneath the spreading tree  
We two will live in honesty.  
If his sweet boy he could forsake,  
With me he never would have stayed:  
From him no harm my babe can take;  
But he, poor man! is wretched made;  
And every day we two will pray  
For him that's gone and far away

75

80

## IX.

"I'll teach my boy the sweetest things:  
I'll teach him how the owl sings.  
My little babe! thy lips are still,  
And thou hast almost sucked thy fill.  
—Where art thou gone, my own dear  
child?  
What wicked looks are those I see?  
Alas! Alas! that look so wild,  
It never, never came from me:  
If thou art mad, my pretty lad,  
Then I must be for ever sad.

85

90

## X.

"Oh! smile on me, my little lamb!  
For I thy own dear mother am:  
My love for thee has well been tried:  
I've sought thy father far and wide.  
I know the poisons of the shade;  
I know the earth-nuts fit for food:  
Then, pretty dear, be not afraid:  
We'll find thy father in the wood.  
Now laugh and be gay, to the woods  
away!  
And there, my babe, we'll live for  
aye."

95

100

# POEMS ON THE NAMING OF PLACES.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

By persons resident in the country, and attached to rural objects, many places will be found unnamed or of unknown names, where little incidents must have occurred, or feelings been experienced, which will have given to such places a private and peculiar interest. From a wish to give some sort of record to such incidents, and renew the gratification of such feelings, Names have been given to Places by the Author and some of his Friends, and the following Poems written in consequence.

### I.

[Composed 1800.—Published 1800.]

It was an April morning: fresh and clear  
The Rivulet, delighting in its strength,  
Ran with a young man's speed; and yet  
the voice

Of waters which the winter had supplied  
Was softened down into a vernal tone. 5  
The spirit of enjoyment and desire,  
And hopes and wishes, from all living  
things

Went circling, like a multitude of sounds.  
The budding groves seemed eager to urge  
on

The steps of June; as if their various hues  
Were only hindrances that stood between  
Them and their object: but, meanwhile,  
prevailed 12

Such an entire contentment in the air  
That every naked ash, and tardy tree  
Yet leafless, showed as if the countenance  
With which it looked on this delightful  
day 16

Were native to the summer.—Up the  
brook

I roamed in the confusion of my heart,  
Alive to all things and forgetting all.  
At length I to a sudden turning came 20  
In this continuous glen, where down a rock  
The Stream, so ardent in its course before,  
Sent forth such sallies of glad sound, that  
all

Which I till then had heard appeared the  
voice

Of common pleasure: beast and bird, the  
lamb, 25

The shepherd's dog, the linnet and the  
thrush,

Vied with this waterfall, and made a song  
Which, while I listened, seemed like the  
wild growth

Or like some natural produce of the air,  
That could not cease to be. Green leaves  
were here; 30

But 'twas the foliage of the rocks—the  
birch,

The yew, the holly, and the bright green  
thorn,

With hanging islands of resplendent  
furze:

And on a summit, distant a short space,  
By any who should look beyond the dell 35  
A single mountain-cottage might be seen.  
I gazed and gazed, and to myself I said,  
"Our thoughts at least are ours; and this

wild nook,

My EMMA<sup>1</sup>, I will dedicate to thee."

—Soon did the spot become my other  
home, 40

My dwelling, and my out-of-doors abode.  
And of the Shepherds who have seen me  
there,

To whom I sometimes in our idle talk  
Have told this fancy, two or three, per-  
haps,

Years after we are gone and in our graves,  
When they have cause to speak of this  
wild place, 46

May call it by the name of EMMA'S DELL.

<sup>1</sup> Emma: the poet's sister Dora, just as *Emmeline* is elsewhere used as a pseudonym for Dorothy. See editor's note on *To a Butterfly*, p. 897.—Ed.

II.

TO JOANNA.

[Composed August, 1890.—Published 1890.]

AMID the smoke of cities did you pass  
The time of early youth; and there you  
learned,  
From years of quiet industry, to love  
The living Beings by your own fire-side,  
With such a strong devotion, that your  
heart

Is slow to meet the sympathies of them  
Who look upon the hills with tenderness,  
And make dear friendships with the  
streams and groves.

Yet we, who are transgressors in this kind,  
Dwelling retired in our simplicity  
Among the woods and fields, we love you  
well,

Joanna! and I guess, since you have been  
So distant from us now for two long years,  
That you will gladly listen to discourse  
However trivial, if you thence be taught  
That they, with whom you once were  
happy, talk  
Familiarly of you and of old times.

While I was seated, now some ten days  
past,  
Beneath those lofty firs, that overtop  
Their ancient neighbour, the old steeple-  
tower,

The Vicar from his gloomy house hard by  
Came forth to greet me; and, when he  
had asked,

"How fares Joanna, that wild-hearted  
Maid!

And when will she return to us?" he  
paused;

And, after short exchange of village news,  
He with grave looks demanded for what  
cause,

Reviving obsolete idolatry,  
I, like a Runic Priest, in characters  
Of formidable size had chiselled out  
Some uncouth name upon the native rock,  
Above the Rotha, by the forest-side.

—Now, by those dear immunities of heart  
Engendered between malice and true love,  
I was not loth to be so catechised,  
And this was my reply:—"As it befell,

One summer morning we had walked  
abroad

At break of day, Joanna and myself.  
—'Twas that delightful season when the  
broom,

Full-flowered, and visible on every steep,  
Along the copses runs in veins of gold.  
Our pathway led us on to Rotha's banks;  
And, when we came in front of that tall  
rock

That eastward looks, I there stopped short  
—and stood

Tracing the lofty barrier with my eye  
From base to summit; such delight I  
found

To note in shrub and tree, in stone and  
flower,

That intermixture of delicious hues,  
Along so vast a surface, all at once,  
In one impression, by connecting force  
Of their own beauty, imaged in the heart.  
—When I had gazed perhaps two minutes'  
space,

Joanna, looking in my eyes, beheld  
That ravishment of mine, and laughed  
aloud.

The Rock, like something starting from a  
sleep,

Took up the Lady's voice, and laughed  
again;

That ancient Woman seated on Helm-crag  
Was ready with her cavern; Hammar-scar,  
And the tall Steep of Silver-how, sent forth  
A noise of laughter; southern Loughrigg  
heard,

And Fairfield answered with a mountain  
tone;

Helvellyn far into the clear blue sky  
Carried the Lady's voice,—old Skiddaw  
blew

His speaking-trumpet;—back out of the  
clouds

Of Glaramara southward came the voice;  
And Kirkstone tossed it from his misty  
head.

—Now whether (said I to our cordial  
Friend,

Who in the hey-day of astonishment  
Smiled in my face) this were in simple  
truth

A work accomplished by the brotherhood

Of ancient mountains, or my ear was  
touched 70

With dreams and visionary impulses  
To me alone imparted, sure I am  
That there was a loud uproar in the hills.  
And, while we both were listening, to my  
side

The fair Joanna drew, as if she wished 75  
To shelter from some object of her fear.  
—And hence, long afterwards, when eigh-  
teen moons

Were wasted, as I chanced to walk alone  
Beneath this rock, at sunrise, on a calm  
And silent morning, I sat down, and there,  
In memory of affections old and true, 81  
I chiselled out in those rude characters  
Joanna's name deep in the living stone:—  
And I, and all who dwell by my fireside,  
Have called the lovely rock, JOANNA'S  
Rock." 85

NOTE.—In Cumberland and Westmoreland are several Inscriptions, upon the native rock, which, from the wasting of time, and the rudeness of the workmanship, have been mistaken for Runic. They are, without doubt, Roman.

The Rotha; mentioned in this poem, is the River which, flowing through the lakes of Grasmere and Rydal, falls into Winandermere. On Helm-crag, that impressive single mountain at the head of the Vale of Grasmere, is a rock which from most points of view bears a striking resemblance to an old Woman cowering. Close by this rock is one of those fissures or caverns, which in the language of the country are called dungeons. Most of the mountains here mentioned immediately surround the Vale of Grasmere; of the others, some are at a considerable distance, but they belong to the same cluster.

### III.

[Composed 1800.—Published 1800.]

THERE is an Eminence,—of these our hills  
The last that parleys with the setting sun;  
We can behold it from our orchard seat;  
And, when at evening we pursue our walk  
Along the public way, this Peak, 6  
Above us, and so distant in its height, 6  
Is visible; and often seems to send  
Its own deep quiet to restore our hearts.  
The meteors make of it a favourite haunt:  
The star of Jove, so beautiful and large  
In the mid heavens, is never half so fair

As when he shines above it. 'Tis in truth  
The loneliest place we have among the  
clouds.

And She who dwells with me, whom I  
have loved

With such communion that no place on  
earth 15

Can ever be a solitude to me,  
Hath to this lonely Summit given my  
Name.

### IV.

[Composed October 10, 1800.—Published 1800.]

A NARROW girdle of rough stones and crags,  
A rude and natural causeway, interposed  
Between the water and a winding slope  
Of copse and thicket, leaves the eastern  
shore

Of Grasmere safe in its own privacy: 5  
And there myself and two beloved Friends,  
One calm September morning, ere the mist  
Had altogether yielded to the sun,  
Sauntered on this retired and difficult way.

—Ill suits the road with one in haste;  
but we 10  
Played with our time; and, as we strolled  
along,

It was our occupation to observe  
Such objects as the waves had tossed  
ashore—

Feather, or leaf, or weed, or withered  
bough,

Each on the other heaped, along the line  
Of the dry wreck. And, in our vacant  
mood, 16

Not seldom did we stop to watch some tuft  
Of dandelion seed or thistle's beard,  
That skimmed the surface of the dead  
calm lake,

Suddenly halting now—a lifeless stand!  
And starting off again with freak as sudden;  
In all its sportive wanderings, all the while,  
Making report of an invisible breeze  
That was its wings, its chariot, and its  
horse,

Its playmate, rather say, its moving soul.  
—And often, trifling with a privilege 26  
Alike indulged to all, we paused, one now,  
And now the other, to point out, perchance  
To pluck, some flower or water-weed, too  
fair

Either to be divided from the place 30  
On which it grew, or to be left alone  
To its own beauty. Many such there are,  
Fair ferns and flowers, and chiefly that  
tall fern,

So stately, of the Queen Osmunda named;  
Plant lovelier, in its own retired abode 35  
On Grasmere's beach, than Naiad by the  
side

Of Grecian brook, or Lady of the Mere,  
Sole-sitting by the shores of old romance.  
—So fared we that bright morning: from  
the fields,

Meanwhile, a noise was heard, the busy  
mirth 40

Of reapers, men and women, boys and girls.  
Delighted much to listen to those sounds,  
And feeding thus our fancies, we advanced  
Along the indented shore; when suddenly,  
Through a thin veil of glittering haze was  
seen 45

Before us, on a point of jutting land,  
The tall and upright figure of a Man  
Attired in peasant's garb, who stood alone,  
Angling beside the margin of the lake.

"Improvident and reckless," we exclaimed,  
"The Man must be, who thus can lose a  
day 51

Of the mid harvest, when the labourer's  
hire

Is ample, and some little might be stored  
Wherewith to cheer him in the winter  
time."

Thus talking of that Peasant, we ap-  
proached 55

Close to the spot where with his rod and  
line

He stood alone; whereat he turned his  
head

To greet us—and we saw a Man worn down  
By sickness, gaunt and lean, with sunken  
cheeks

And wasted limbs, his legs so long and lean  
That for my single self I looked at them,  
Forgetful of the body they sustained.—62

Too weak to labour in the harvest field,  
The Man was using his best skill to gain  
A pittance from the dead unfeeling lake  
That knew not of his wants. I will not say  
What thoughts immediately were ours,  
nor how 67

The happy idleness of that sweet morn,  
With all its lovely images, was changed  
To serious musing and to self-reproach. 70  
Nor did we fail to see within ourselves  
What need there is to be reserved in speech,  
And temper all our thoughts with charity.  
—Therefore, unwilling to forget that day,  
My Friend, Myself, and She who then  
received 75

The same admonishment, have called the  
place

By a memorial name, uncouth indeed  
As e'er by mariner was given to bay  
Or foreland, on a new-discovered coast;  
And POINT RASH-JUDGMENT is the Name  
it bears. 80

## V.

## TO M. H.

[Composed after December 21, and before  
December 23, 1799.—Published 1800.]

OUR walk was far among the ancient trees:  
There was no road, nor any woodman's  
path;

But a thick umbrage—checking the wild  
growth

Of weed and sapling, along soft green turf  
Beneath the branches—of itself had made  
A track, that brought us to a slip of lawn,  
And a small bed of water in the woods. 7  
All round this pool both flocks and herds  
might drink

On its firm margin, even as from a well,  
Or some stone-basin which the herdsman's  
hand 10

Had shaped for their refreshment; nor  
did sun,

Or wind from any quarter, ever come,  
But as a blessing to this calm recess,  
This glade of water and this one green  
field.

The spot was made by Nature for herself;  
The travellers know it not, and 'twill  
remain 16

Unknown to them; but it is beautiful;  
And if a man should plant his cottage near,  
Should sleep beneath the shelter of its trees,  
And blend its waters with his daily meal,  
He would so love it, that in his death-hour  
Its image would survive among his  
thoughts: 22

And therefore, my sweet MARY, this still  
Nook,  
With all its beeches, we have named from  
You!

## VI.

[Began August 28, 30, 1860.—Finished 1862.—  
Published 1815.]

WHEN, to the attractions of the busy world  
Preferring studious leisure, I had chosen  
A habitation in this peaceful Vale,  
Sharp season followed of continual storm  
In deepest winter; and, from week to  
week,  
Pathway, and lane, and public road, were  
clogged

With frequent showers of snow. Upon a  
hill,

At a short distance from my cottage, stands  
A stately Fir-grove, whither I was wont  
To hasten, for I found, beneath the roof  
Of that perennial shade, a cloistral place  
Of refuge, with an unincumbered floor.  
Here, in safe covert, on the shallow snow,  
And sometimes on a speck of visible earth,  
The redbreast near me hopped; nor was  
I loth

To sympathize with vulgar coppice birds  
That, for protection from the nipping blast,  
Hither repaired.—A single beech-tree grew  
Within this grove of firs! and, on the fork  
Of that one beech, appeared a thrush's nest;  
A last year's nest, conspicuously built  
At such small elevation from the ground  
As gave sure sign that they, who in that  
house

Of nature and of love had made their home  
Amid the fir-trees, all the summer long  
Dwelt in a tranquil spot. And oftentimes  
A few sheep, stragglers from some moun-  
tain-flock,

Would watch my motions with suspicious  
stare,

From the remotest outskirts of the grove,—  
Some nook where they had made their  
final stand,

Huddling together from two fears—the  
fear

Of me and of the storm. Full many an  
hour

Here did I lose. But in this grove the trees

Had been so thickly planted and had  
thriven

In such perplexed and intricate array,  
That vainly did I seek beneath their stems  
A length of open space, where to and fro  
My feet might move without concern or  
care;

And, baffled thus, though earth from day  
to day

Was fettered, and the air by storm dis-  
turbed,

I ceased the shelter to frequent,—and  
prized,

Less than I wished to prize, that calm  
recess.

The snows dissolved, and genial Spring  
returned

To clothe the fields with verdure. Other  
haunts

Meanwhile were mine; till one bright  
April day,

By chance retiring from the glare of noon  
To this forsaken covert, there I found

A hoary pathway traced between the trees,  
And winding on with such an easy line

Along a natural opening, that I stood  
Much wondering how I could have sought  
in vain

For what was now so obvious. To abide,  
For an allotted interval of ease,

Under my cottage-roof, had gladly come  
From the wild sea a cherished Visitant;

And with the sight of this same path—  
begun,

Begun and ended, in the shady grove,  
Pleasant conviction flashed upon my mind

That, to this opportune recess allured,  
He had surveyed it with a finer eye,

A heart more wakeful; and had worn the  
track

By pacing here, unwearied and alone,  
In that habitual restlessness of foot

That haunts the Sailor, measuring o'er  
and o'er

His short domain upon the vessel's deck,  
While she pursues her course through the

dreary sea.

When thou hadst quitted Esthwaite's  
pleasant shore,

And taken thy first leave of those green hills

And rocks that were the play-ground of thy youth,

Year followed year, my Brother! and we two,

Conversing not, knew little in what mould Each other's mind was fashioned; and at length,

When once again we met in Grasmere Vale,

Between us there was little other bond Than common feelings of fraternal love.

But thou, a School-boy, to the sea hadst carried

Undying recollections; Nature there Was with thee; she, who loved us both, she still

Was with thee; and even so didst thou become

A silent Poet; from the solitude Of the vast sea didst bring a watchful heart Still couchant, an inevitable ear, And an eye practised like a blind man's touch.<sup>1</sup>

—Back to the joyless Ocean thou art gone; Nor from this vestige of thy musing hours Could I withhold thy honoured name,— and now

I love the fir-grove with a perfect love. Thither do I withdraw when cloudless suns Shine hot, or wind blows troublesome and strong;

And there I sit at evening, when the steep Of Silver-how, and Grasmere's peaceful lake

And one green island, gleam between the stems

Of the dark firs, a visionary scene! And while I gaze upon the spectacle

Of clouded splendour, on this dream-like sight

Of solemn loveliness, I think on thee,

My Brother, and on all which thou hast lost.

Nor seldom, if I rightly guess, while Thou, Muttering the verses which I muttered first

Among the mountains, through the midnight watch

Art pacing thoughtfully the vessel's deck In some far region, here, while o'er my head,

At every impulse of the moving breeze, The fir-grove murmurs with a sea-like sound,

Alone I tread this path;—for aught I know, Timing my steps to thine; and, with a store

Of undistinguishable sympathies, Mingling most earnest wishes for the day When we, and others whom we love, shall meet

A second time, in Grasmere's happy Vale.

NOTE.—This wish was not granted; the lamented Person not long after perished by shipwreck, in discharge of his duty as Commander of the Honourable East India Company's Vessel, the Earl of Abergavenny.

## VII.

[Composed 1845.—Published 1845.]

FORTH from a jutting ridge, around whose base

Winds our deep Vale, two heath-clad Rocks ascend

In fellowship, the loftiest of the pair Rising to no ambitious height; yet both, O'er lake and stream, mountain and flowery mead,

Unfolding prospects fair as human eyes Ever beheld. Up-led with mutual help, To one or other brow of those twin Peaks Were two adventurous Sisters wont to climb,

And took no note of the hour while thence they gazed,

The blooming heath their couch, gazed side by side,

In speechless admiration. I, a witness And frequent sharer of their calm delight With thankful heart, to either Eminence Gave the baptismal name each Sister bore.

<sup>1</sup> Lines 1-83 were probably written on August 29, 30, 1800; the remainder in 1802, while John W. was absent on the voyage to China from which he returned in September of that year. Can this be the *Silver How Poem* to which (Dorothy W. tells us) William wrote a conclusion on March 26, 1802? See Knight's "Life of W. W.," vol. i. pp. 302-3.—Ed.

Now are they parted, far as Death's cold  
hand

16

Hath power to part the Spirits of those  
who love

As they did love. Ye kindred Pinnacles—

That, while the generations of mankind

Follow each other to their hiding-place 20

In time's abyss, are privileged to endure

Beautiful in yourselves, and richly graced

With like command of beauty—grant your  
aid

For MARY's humble, SARAH's silent claim,<sup>1</sup>

That their pure joy in nature may survive

From age to age in blended memory. 26

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<sup>1</sup> MARY, the poet's wife; SARAH, her sister, who died at Rydal Mount on June 23, 1835. See *Miscellaneous Sonnets*, I. XXIX.—ED.

# POEMS OF THE FANCY.

## I.

### A MORNING EXERCISE.

[Composed 1828.—Published 1882.]

FANCY, who leads the pastimes of the glad,  
Full oft is pleased a wayward dart to  
throw;  
Sending sad shadows after things not sad,  
Peopling the harmless fields with signs of  
woe:

Beneath her sway, a simple forest cry 5  
Becomes an echo of man's misery.

Blithe ravens croak of death; and when  
the owl

Tries his two voices for a favourite strain—  
*Tu-whit—Tu-whoo!* the unsuspecting fowl  
Forebodes mishap or seems but to com-  
plain; 10

Fancy, intent to harass and annoy,  
Can thus pervert the evidence of joy.

Through border wilds where naked  
Indians stray,

Myriads of notes attest her subtle skill;  
A feathered task-master cries, "WORK  
AWAY!" 15

And in thy iteration, "WHIP POOR  
WILL!" 21

Is heard the spirit of a toil-worn slave,  
Lashed out of life, not quiet in the grave.

What wonder? at her bidding, ancient  
lays 19

Steeped in dire grief the voice of Philomel;  
And that fleet messenger of summer days,  
The Swallow, twittered subject to like  
spell;

But ne'er could Fancy bend the buoyant  
Lark

To melancholy service—hark! O hark!

The daisy sleeps upon the dewy lawn, 25  
Not lifting yet the head that evening  
bowed;

But *He* is risen, a later star of dawn,  
Glittering and twinkling near yon rosy  
cloud;

Bright gem instinct with music, vocal  
spark;

The happiest bird that sprang out of the  
Ark! 30

Hail, blest above all kinds!—Supremely  
skilled

Restless with fixed to balance, high with  
low,

Thou leav'st the halcyon free her hopes to  
build

On such forbearance as the deep may  
show; 34

Perpetual flight, unchecked by earthly ties,  
Leav'st to the wandering bird of paradise.

Faithful, though swift as lightning, the  
meek dove;

Yet more hath Nature reconciled in thee;  
So constant with thy downward eye of  
love,

Yet, in aerial singleness, so free; 40  
So humble, yet so ready to rejoice

In power of wing and never-wearied voice.

To the last point of vision, and beyond,  
Mount, daring warbler!—that love-  
prompted strain,

("Twixt thee and thine a never-failing  
bond), 45

Thrills not the less the bosom of the plain:  
Yet might'st thou seem, proud privilege!  
to sing

All independent of the leafy spring.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> This stanza was transferred in 1845 to its  
present place from the poem (composed 1825;  
published 1827) *To a Skylark*, beginning,  
"Ethereal minstrel! pilgrim of the sky."—Ed.

<sup>1</sup> See Waterton's "Wanderings in South  
America."

How would it please old Ocean to partake,  
With sailors longing for a breeze in vain,  
The harmony thy notes most gladly make  
Where earth resembles most his own  
domain!

Urania's self might welcome with pleased  
ear

These matins mounting towards her na-  
tive sphere.

Chanter by heaven attracted, whom no  
bars 55  
To daylight known deter from that pur-  
suit,

'Tis well that some sage instinct, when  
the stars

Come forth at evening, keeps Thee still  
and mute;

For not an eyelid could to sleep incline  
Wert thou among them, singing as they  
shine! 60

## II.

## A FLOWER GARDEN

AT COLEORTON HALL, LEICESTERSHIRE.

[Composed 1824.—Published 1827.]

TELL me, ye Zephyrs! that unfold,  
While fluttering o'er this gay Recess,  
Pinions that fanned the teeming mould  
Of Eden's blissful wilderness,  
Did only softly-stealing hours 5  
There close the peaceful lives of flowers?

Say, when the *moving* creatures saw  
All kinds commingled without fear,  
Prevailed a like indulgent law  
For the still growths that prosper here?  
Did wanton fawn and kid forbear 11  
The half-blown rose, the lily spare?

Or peeped they often from their beds,  
And prematurely disappeared,  
Devoured like pleasure ere it spreads 15  
A bosom to the sun endeared?  
If such their harsh untimely doom,  
It falls not *here* on bud or bloom.

All summer-long the happy Eve  
Of this fair Spot her flowers may bind, 20  
Nor e'er, with ruffled fancy, grieve,  
From the next glance she casts, to find  
That love for little things by Fate  
Is rendered vain as love for great.

Yet, where the guardian fence is wound, 25  
So subtly are our eyes beguiled,  
We see not nor suspect a bound,  
No more than in some forest wild;  
The sight is free as air—or crost  
Only by art in nature lost. 30

And though the jealous turf refuse  
By random footsteps to be prest,  
And feed on never-sullied dews,  
Ye, gentle breezes from the west,  
With all the ministers of hope 35  
Are tempted to this sunny slope!

And hither throngs of birds resort;  
Some, inmates lodged in shady nests,  
Some, perched on stems of stately port  
That nod to welcome transient guests; 40  
While hare and leveret, seen at play,  
*Appear* not more shut out than they.

Apt emblem (for reproof of pride)  
This delicate Enclosure shows  
Of modest kindness, that would hide 45  
The firm protection she bestows;  
Of manners, like its viewless fence,  
Ensuring peace to innocence.

Thus spake the moral Muse—her wing  
Abruptly spreading to depart, 50  
She left that farewell offering,  
Memento for some docile heart;  
That may respect the good old age  
When Fancy was Truth's willing Page;  
And Truth would skim the flowery glade,  
Though entering but as Fancy's Shade, 56

## III.

[Composed March 18, 1798.—Published 1800.]

A WHIRL-BLAST from behind the hill  
Rushed o'er the wood with startling 5  
sound;  
Then—all at once the air was still,  
And showers of hailstones pattered round.  
Where leafless oaks towered high above, 5  
I sat within an undergrove  
Of tallest hollies, tall and green;  
A fairer bower was never seen.  
From year to year the spacious floor  
With withered leaves is covered o'er, 10  
And all the year the bower is green.

But see! where'er the hailstones drop  
 The withered leaves all skip and hop;  
 There's not a breeze—no breath of air—  
 Yet here, and there, and every where 15  
 Along the floor, beneath the shade  
 By those embowering hollies made,  
 The leaves in myriads jump and spring,  
 As if with pipes and music rare  
 Some Robin Good-fellow were there, 20  
 And all those leaves, in festive glee,  
 Were dancing to the minstrelsy.

## IV.

THE WATERFALL AND THE  
EGLANTINE.

[Composed 1800.—Published 1800.]

## I.

BEGONE, thou fond presumptuous Elf,"  
 Exclaimed an angry Voice,  
 "Nor dare to thrust thy foolish self  
 Between me and my choice!"  
 A small Cascade fresh swoln with snows 5  
 Thus threatened a poor Briar-rose,  
 That, all bespattered with his foam,  
 And dancing high and dancing low,  
 Was living, as a child might know,  
 In an unhappy home. 10

## II.

"Dost thou presume my course to block?  
 Off, off! or, puny Thing!  
 I'll hurl thee headlong with the rock  
 To which thy fibres cling."  
 The Flood was tyrannous and strong; 15  
 The patient Briar suffered long,  
 Nor did he utter groan or sigh,  
 Hoping the danger would be past;  
 But, seeing no relief, at last  
 He ventured to reply. 20

## III.

"Ah!" said the Briar, "blame me not;  
 Why should we dwell in strife?  
 We who in this sequestered spot  
 Once lived a happy life!  
 You stirred me on my rocky bed— 25  
 What pleasure through my veins you  
 spread

The summer long, from day to day,  
 My leaves you freshened and bedewed;  
 Nor was it common gratitude  
 That did your cares repay. 30

## IV.

"When spring came on with bud and bell,  
 Among these rocks did I  
 Before you hang my wreaths to tell  
 That gentle days were nigh!  
 And in the sultry summer hours 35  
 I sheltered you with leaves and flowers;  
 And in my leaves—now shed and gone,  
 The linnet lodged, and for us two  
 Chanted his pretty songs, when you  
 Had little voice or none. 40

## V.

"But now proud thoughts are in your  
 breast—  
 What grief is mine you see,  
 Ah! would you think, even yet how blest  
 Together we might be!  
 Though of both leaf and flower bereft, 45  
 Some ornaments to me are left—  
 Rich store of scarlet hips is mine,  
 With which I, in my humble way,  
 Would deck you many a winter day,  
 A happy Eglantine!" 50

## VI.

What more he said I cannot tell,  
 The Torrent down the rocky dell  
 Came thundering loud and fast;  
 I listened, nor aught else could hear;  
 The Briar quaked—and much I fear 55  
 Those accents were his last.

## V.

## THE OAK AND THE BROOM.

A PASTORAL.

[Composed 1800.—Published 1800.]

## I.

His simple truths did Andrew glean  
 Beside the babbling rills;  
 A careful student he had been  
 Among the woods and hills.  
 One winter's night, when through the  
 trees 5  
 The wind was roaring, on his knees

His youngest born did Andrew hold :  
And while the rest, a ruddy quire,  
Were seated round their blazing fire,  
This Tale the Shepherd told.

10

## II.

"I saw a crag, a lofty stone  
As ever tempest beat !  
Out of its head an Oak had grown,  
A Broom out of its feet.  
The time was March, a cheerful noon—  
The thaw-wind, with the breath of June,  
Breathed gently from the warm south-

15

west :

When, in a voice sedate with age,  
This Oak, a giant and a sage,  
His neighbour thus addressed :—

20

## III.

"Eight weary weeks, through rock and  
clay,  
Along this mountain's edge,  
The Frost hath wrought both night and  
day,

Wedge driving after wedge.  
Look up ! and think, above your head  
What trouble, surely, will be bred ;  
Last night I heard a crash—'tis true,  
The splinters took another road—  
I see them yonder—what a load  
For such a Thing as you !

25

30

## IV.

"You are preparing as before,  
To deck your slender shape ;  
And yet, just three years back—no more—  
You had a strange escape :  
Down from yon cliff a fragment broke ;  
It thundered down, with fire and smoke,  
And hitherward pursued its way ;  
This ponderous block was caught by me,  
And o'er your head, as you may see,  
'Tis hanging to this day !

40

## V.

"If breeze or bird to this rough steep  
Your kind's first seed did bear ;  
The breeze had better been asleep,  
The bird caught in a snare :  
For you and your green twigs decoy  
The little witless shepherd-boy

45

To come and slumber in your bower ;  
And trust me, on some sultry noon,  
Both you and he, Heaven knows how  
soon !

Will perish in one hour.

50

## VI.

"From me this friendly warning take"—  
The Broom began to doze,  
And thus, to keep herself awake,  
Did gently interpose :

'My thanks for your discourse are due ;  
That more than what you say is true  
I know, and I have known it long ;  
Frail is the bond by which we hold  
Our being, whether young or old,  
Wise, foolish, weak, or strong.

60

## VII.

"Disasters, do the best we can,  
Will reach both great and small ;  
And he is oft the wisest man,  
Who is not wise at all.  
For me, why should I wish to roam ?  
This spot is my paternal home,  
It is my pleasant heritage ;  
My father many a happy year  
Spread here his careless blossoms, here  
Attained a good old age.

65

70

## VIII.

"Even such as his may be my lot.  
What cause have I to haunt  
My heart with terrors ? Am I not  
In truth a favoured plant !  
On me such bounty Summer pours,  
That I am covered o'er with flowers ;  
And when the Frost is in the sky,  
My branches are so fresh and gay  
That you might look at me and say,  
This Plant can never die.

75

80

## IX.

"The butterfly, all green and gold,  
To me hath often flown,  
Here in my blossoms to behold  
Wings lovely as his own.  
When grass is chill with rain or dew,  
Beneath my shade the mother-ewe  
Lies with her infant lamb ; I see  
The love they to each other make,  
And the sweet joy which they partake,  
It is a joy to me.'

90

## X.

"Her voice was blithe, her heart was light;  
The Broom might have pursued  
Her speech, until the stars of night  
Their journey had renewed;  
But in the branches of the oak 95  
Two ravens now began to croak  
Their nuptial song, a gladsome air;  
And to her own green bower the breeze  
That instant brought two stripling bees  
To rest, or murmur there. 100

## XI.

"One night, my Children! from the north  
There came a furious blast;  
At break of day I ventured forth,  
And near the cliff I passed.  
The storm had fallen upon the Oak, 105  
And struck him with a mighty stroke,  
And whirled, and whirled him far away;  
And, in one hospitable cleft,  
The little careless Broom was left  
To live for many a day." 110

## VI.

## TO A SEXTON.

[Composed 1799.—Published 1800.]

LET thy wheel-barrow alone—  
Wherefore, Sexton, piling still  
In thy bone-house bone on bone?  
'Tis already like a hill  
In a field of battle made, 5  
Where three thousand skulls are laid;  
These died in peace each with the other,—  
Father, sister, friend, and brother.

Mark the spot to which I point!  
From this platform, eight feet square, 10  
Take not even a finger-joint:  
Andrew's whole fire-side is there.  
Here, alone, before thine eyes,  
Simon's sickly daughter lies,  
From weakness now and pain defended,  
Whom he twenty winters tended. 16

Look but at the gardener's pride—  
How he glories, when he sees  
Roses, lilies, side by side,  
Violets in families! 20

By the heart of Man, his tears,  
By his hopes and by his fears,  
Thou, too heedless, art the Warden  
Of a far superior garden.

Thus then, each to other dear, 25  
Let them all in quiet lie,  
Andrew there, and Susan here,  
Neighbours in mortality;  
And should I live through sun and rain  
Seven widowed years without my Jane,  
O Sexton, do not then remove her, 31  
Let one grave hold the Loved and Lover!

## VII.

## TO THE DAISY.

[Composed 1802.—Published 1807.]

"Her<sup>1</sup> divine skill taught me this,  
That from every thing I saw  
I could some instruction draw,  
And raise pleasure to the height  
Through the meanest object's sight.  
By the murmur of a spring,  
Or the least bough's rustelling;  
By a Daisy whose leaves spread  
Shut when Titan goes to bed;  
Or a shady bush or tree;  
She could more infuse in me  
Than all Nature's beauties can  
In some other wiser man."

G. WITHER.

IN youth from rock to rock I went,  
From hill to hill in discontent  
Of pleasure high and turbulent,  
Most pleased when most uneasy;  
But now my own delights I make,— 5  
My thirst at every rill can slake,  
And gladly Nature's love partake  
Of Thee, sweet Daisy!

Thee Winter in the garland wears  
That thinly decks his few grey hairs; 10  
Spring parts the clouds with softest airs,  
That she may sun thee;  
Whole Summer-fields are thine by right;  
And Autumn, melancholy Wight!  
Doth in thy crimson head delight 15  
When rains are on thee.

<sup>1</sup> His Muse.

In shoals and bands, a morrice train,  
Thou greet'st the traveller in the lane;  
Pleased at his greeting thee again;

Yet nothing daunted, 20  
Nor grieved if thou be set at nought:  
And oft alone in nooks remote  
We meet thee, like a pleasant thought,  
When such are wanted.

Be violets in their secret mews 25  
The flowers the wanton Zephyrs choose;  
Proud be the rose, with rains and dews

Her head impearling,  
Thou liv'st with less ambitious aim,  
Yet hast not gone without thy fame; 30  
Thou art indeed by many a claim  
The Poet's darling.

If to a rock from rains he fly,  
Or, some bright day of April sky,  
Imprisoned by hot sunshine lie 35  
Near the green holly,  
And wearily at length should fare;  
He needs but look about, and there  
Thou art!—a friend at hand, to scare  
His melancholy. 40

A hundred times, by rock or bower,  
Ere thus I have lain couched an hour,  
Have I derived from thy sweet power  
Some apprehension;  
Some steady love; some brief delight; 45  
Some memory that had taken flight;  
Some chime of fancy wrong or right;  
Or stray invention.

If stately passions in me burn,  
And one chance look to Thee should turn,  
I drink out of an humbler urn 51  
A lowlier pleasure;  
The homely sympathy that heeds  
The common life our nature breeds;  
A wisdom fitted to the needs  
Of hearts at leisure. 55

Fresh-smitten by the morning ray,  
When thou art up, alert and gay,  
Then, cheerful Flower! my spirits play  
With kindred gladness: 60  
And when, at dusk, by dews oppress'd  
Thou sink'st, the image of thy rest  
Hath often eased my pensive breast  
Of careful sadness.

And all day long I number yet, 65  
All seasons through, another debt,  
Which I, wherever thou art met,  
To thee am owing;  
An instinct call it, a blind sense;  
A happy, genial influence, 70  
Coming one knows not how, nor whence,  
Nor whither going.

Child of the Year! that round dost run  
Thy pleasant course,—when day's begun  
As ready to salute the sun 75  
As lark or leveret,  
Thy long-lost praise thou shalt regain;  
Nor be less dear to future men  
Than in old time;—thou not in vain  
Art Nature's favourite.<sup>1</sup> 80

## VIII.

## TO THE SAME FLOWER.

[Composed 1802.—Published 1807.]

WITH little here to do or see  
Of things that in the great world be,  
Daisy! again I talk to thee,  
For thou art worthy,  
Thou unassuming Common-place 5  
Of Nature, with that homely face,  
And yet with something of a grace  
Which love makes for thee!

Oft on the dappled turf at ease  
I sit, and play with similes, 10  
Loose types of things through all degrees,  
Thoughts of thy raising:  
And many a fond and idle name  
I give to thee, for praise or blame,  
As is the humour of the game, 15  
While I am gazing.

A nun demure of lowly port;  
Or sprightly maiden, of Love's court,  
In thy simplicity the sport  
Of all temptations; 20  
A queen in crown of rubies drest;  
A starveling in a scanty vest;  
Are all, as seems to suit thee best,  
Thy appellations.

<sup>1</sup> See, in Chaucer and the elder Poets, the honours formerly paid to this flower.

A little Cyclops with one eye 25  
 Staring to threaten and defy,  
 That thought comes next—and instantly  
   The freak is over,  
 The shape will vanish—and behold  
 A silver shield with boss of gold,  
 That spreads itself, some faery bold  
   In fight to cover !  
 I see thee glittering from afar—  
 And then thou art a pretty star ;  
 Not quite so fair as many are 35  
   In heaven above thee !  
 Yet like a star, with glittering crest,  
 Self-poised in air thou seem'st to rest ;—  
 May peace come never to his nest,  
   Who shall reprove thee ! 40  
 Bright *Flower* ! for by that name at last,  
 When all my reveries are past,  
 I call thee, and to that cleave fast,  
   Sweet silent creature !  
 That breath'st with me in sun and air, 45  
 Do thou, as thou art wont, repair  
 My heart with gladness, and a share  
   Of thy meek nature !

## IX.

## THE GREEN LINNET.

[Composed 1803.—Published 1807.]

BENEATH these fruit-tree boughs that shed  
 Their snow-white blossoms on my head,  
 With brightest sunshine round me spread  
   Of spring's unclouded weather,  
 In this sequestered nook how sweet 5  
 To sit upon my orchard-seat !  
 And birds and flowers once more to greet,  
   My last year's friends together.  
 One have I marked, the happiest guest  
 In all this covert of the blest : 10  
 Hail to Thee, far above the rest  
   In joy of voice and pinion !  
 Thou, Linnet ! in thy green array,  
 Presiding Spirit here to-day,  
 Dost lead the revels of the May ; 15  
   And this is thy dominion.  
 While birds, and butterflies, and flowers,  
 Make all one band of paramours,  
 Thou, ranging up and down the bowers,  
   Art sole in thy employment : 20

A Life, a Presence like the Air,  
 Scattering thy gladness without care,  
 Too blest with any one to pair ;  
   Thyself thy own enjoyment.  
 Amid yon tuft of hazel trees, 25  
 That twinkle to the gusty breeze,  
 Behold him perched in ecstasies,  
   Yet seeming still to hover ;  
 There ! where the flutter of his wings  
 Upon his back and body flings 30  
 Shadows and sunny glimmerings,  
   That cover him all over.  
 My dazzled sight he oft deceives,  
 A Brother of the dancing leaves ;  
 Then flits, and from the cottage eaves 35  
   Pours forth his song in gushes ;  
 As if by that exulting strain  
 He mocked and treated with disdain  
 The voiceless Form he chose to feign,  
   While fluttering in the bushes. 40

## X.

## TO A SKY-LARK.

[Composed 1805.—Published 1807.]

UP with me ! up with me into the clouds !  
   For thy song, Lark, is strong ;  
 Up with me, up with me into the clouds !  
   Singing, singing,  
 With clouds and sky about thee ringing, 5  
   Lift me, guide me, till I find  
 That spot which seems so to thy mind !  
 I have walked through wildernesses  
   dreary,  
 And to-day my heart is weary ;  
 Had I now the wings of a Faery, 10  
 Up to thee would I fly.  
 There is madness about thee, and joy  
   divine  
 In that song of thine ;  
 Lift me, guide me, high and high  
 To thy banqueting place in the sky. 15  
   Joyous as morning,  
 Thou art laughing and scorning ;  
 Thou hast a nest for thy love and thy  
   rest,  
 And, though little troubled with sloth,  
 Drunken Lark ! thou wouldst be loth

|  |    |                                    |    |
|--|----|------------------------------------|----|
| To be such a traveller as I                | 21 | Has a thought about her nest,      |    |
| Happy, happy Liver,                        |    | Thou wilt come with half a call,   |    |
| With a soul as strong as a mountain        |    | Spreading out thy glossy breast    |    |
| river                                      |    | Like a careless Prodigal;          | 30 |
| Pouring out praise to the almighty         |    | Telling tales about the sun,       |    |
| Giver,                                     |    | When we've little warmth, or none. |    |
| Joy and jollity be with us both!           | 25 |                                    |    |
| Alas! my journey, rugged and uneven,       |    | Poets, vain men in their mood!     |    |
| Through prickly moors or dusty ways        |    | Travel with the multitude:         |    |
| must wind;                                 |    | Never heed them; I aver            | 35 |
| But hearing thee, or others of thy kind,   |    | That they all are wanton wooers;   |    |
| As full of gladness and as free of heaven, |    | But the thrifty cottager,          |    |
| I, with my fate contented, will plod on,   | 30 | Who stirs little out of doors,     |    |
| And hope for higher raptures, when life's  |    | Joys to spy thee near her home;    |    |
| day is done.                               |    | Spring is coming, Thou art come!   | 40 |

## XI.

TO THE SMALL CELANDINE.<sup>1</sup>

[Composed April 30, 1802.—Published 1807.]

|                                      |    |                                    |    |
|--------------------------------------|----|------------------------------------|----|
| PANSIES, lilies, kingcups, daisies,  |    | Comfort have thou of thy merit,    |    |
| Let them live upon their praises;    |    | Kindly, unassuming Spirit!         |    |
| Long as there's a sun that sets,     |    | Careless of thy neighbourhood,     |    |
| Primroses will have their glory;     |    | Thou dost show thy pleasant face   |    |
| Long as there are violets,           |    | On the moor, and in the wood,      | 45 |
| They will have a place in story:     |    | In the lane;—there's not a place,  |    |
| There's a flower that shall be mine, |    | Howsoever mean it be,              |    |
| 'Tis the little Celandine.           | 5  | But 'tis good enough for thee.     |    |
| Eyes of some men travel far          |    | Ill befall the yellow flowers,     |    |
| For the finding of a star;           |    | Children of the flaring hours!     | 50 |
| Up and down the heavens they go,     |    | Buttercups, that will be seen,     |    |
| Men that keep a mighty rout!         |    | Whether we will see or no;         |    |
| I'm as great as they, I trow,        |    | Others, too, of lofty mien;        |    |
| Since the day I found thee out,      |    | They have done as worldlings do,   |    |
| Little Flower—I'll make a stir,      |    | Taken praise that should be thine, | 55 |
| Like a sage astronomer.              | 10 | Little, humble Celandine.          |    |
| Modest, yet withal an Elf            |    | Prophet of delight and mirth,      |    |
| Bold, and lavish of thyself;         |    | Ill-requited upon earth;           |    |
| Since we needs must first have met   |    | Herald of a mighty band,           |    |
| I have seen thee, high and low,      |    | Of a joyous train ensuing,         | 60 |
| Thirty years or more, and yet        |    | Serving at my heart's command,     |    |
| 'Twas a face I did not know;         |    | Tasks that are no tasks renewing,  |    |
| Thou hast now, go where I may,       |    | I will sing, as doth behove,       |    |
| Fifty greetings in a day.            | 20 | Hymns in praise of what I love!    |    |

## XII.

## TO THE SAME FLOWER.

[Composed May 1, 1802.—Published 1807.]

|                               |    |                                  |  |
|-------------------------------|----|----------------------------------|--|
| Ere a leaf is on a bush,      | 25 | PLEASURES newly found are sweet  |  |
| In the time before the thrush |    | When they lie about our feet:    |  |
|                               |    | February last, my heart          |  |
|                               |    | First at sight of thee was glad; |  |

<sup>1</sup> Common Pilewort.

All unheard of as thou art,  
Thou must needs, I think, have had,  
Celandine ! and long ago,  
Praise of which I nothing know.

I have not a doubt but he,  
Whosoe'er the man might be,  
Who the first with pointed rays  
(Workman worthy to be sainted)  
Set the sign-board in a blaze,  
When the rising sun he painted,  
Took the fancy from a glance  
At thy glittering countenance.

Soon as gentle breezes bring  
News of winter's vanishing,  
And the children build their bowers,  
Sticking 'kerchief-plots of mould  
All about with full-blown flowers,  
Thick as sheep in shepherd's fold !  
With the proudest thou art there,  
Mantling in the tiny square.

Often have I sighed to measure  
By myself a lonely pleasure,  
Sighed to think I read a book  
Only read, perhaps, by me ;  
Yet I long could overlook  
Thy bright coronet and Thee,  
And thy arch and wily ways,  
And thy store of other praise.

Blithe of heart, from week to week  
Thou dost play at hide-and-seek ;  
While the patient primrose sits  
Like a beggar in the cold,  
Thou, a flower of wiser wits,  
Slip'st into thy sheltering hold ;  
Liveliest of the vernal train  
When ye all are out again.

Drawn by what peculiar spell,  
By what charm of sight or smell,  
Does the dim-eyed curious Bee,  
Labouring for her waxen cells,  
Fondly settle upon Thee  
Prized above all buds and bells  
Opening daily at thy side,  
By the season multiplied ?<sup>1</sup>

5 Thou art not beyond the moon,  
But a thing "beneath our shoon :"  
30 Let the bold Discoverer thrid  
In his bark the polar sea ;  
Rear who will a pyramid ;  
Praise it is enough for me,  
10 If there be but three or four  
Who will love my little Flower. 55

## XIII.

## THE SEVEN SISTERS ;

OR,

## THE SOLITUDE OF BINNORIE.

[Composed before August 17, 1800.—Published 1807.]

20 SEVEN Daughters had Lord Archibald,  
All children of one mother :  
You could not say in one short day  
What love they bore each other.  
A garland of seven lilies wrought ! 5  
Seven Sisters that together dwell ;  
25 But he, bold Knight as ever fought,  
Their Father, took of them no thought,  
He loved the wars so well.  
Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully, 10  
30 The solitude of Binnorie !

## II.

Fresh blows the wind, a western wind,  
And from the shores of Erin,  
Across the wave, a Rover brave  
To Binnorie is steering : 15  
35 Right onward to the Scottish strand  
The gallant ship is borne ;  
The warriors leap upon the land,  
And hark ! the Leader of the band  
Hath blown his bugle horn. 20  
40 Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,  
The solitude of Binnorie.

## III.

Beside a grotto of their own,  
With boughs above them closing,  
45 The Seven are laid, and in the shade 25  
They lie like fawns reposing.  
But now, upstarting with affright  
At noise of man and steed,  
Away they fly to left, to right—  
Of your fair household, Father-knight, 30  
Methinks you take small heed !

<sup>1</sup> This stanza originally came after line 40 of the preceding poem (No. XI.). It was placed here in 1845.—ED.

Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,  
The solitude of Binnorie.

## IV.

Away the seven fair Campbells fly,  
And over hill and hollow, 35  
With menace proud, and insult loud,  
The youthful Rovers follow.  
Cried they, "Your Father loves to roam:  
Enough for him to find  
The empty house when he comes home; 40  
For us your yellow ringlets comb,  
For us be fair and kind!"  
Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,  
The solitude of Binnorie.

## V.

Some close behind, some side by side, 45  
Like clouds in stormy weather;  
They run, and cry, "Nay, let us die,  
And let us die together."  
A lake was near; the shore was steep;  
There never foot had been; 50  
They ran, and with a desperate leap  
Together plunged into the deep,  
Nor ever more were seen.  
Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,  
The solitude of Binnorie. 55

## VI.

The stream that flows out of the lake,  
As through the glen it rambles,  
Repeats a moan o'er moss and stone,  
For those seven lovely Campbells.  
Seven little Islands, green and bare, 60  
Have risen from out the deep:  
The fishers say, those sisters fair  
By faeries all are buried there,  
And there together sleep.  
Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully, 65  
The solitude of Binnorie.

## XIV.

[Composed 1808.—Published 1807.]

Who fancied what a pretty sight  
This Rock would be if edged around  
With living snow-drops? circlet bright!  
How glorious to this orchard-ground!  
Who loved the little Rock, and set 5  
Upon its head this coronet?

Was it the humour of a child?  
Or rather of some gentle maid,  
Whose brows, the day that she was styled  
The shepherd-queen, werethus arrayed? 10  
Of man mature, or matron sage?  
Or old man toying with his age?

I asked—'twas whispered; The device  
To each and all might well belong:  
It is the Spirit of Paradise 15  
That prompts such work, a Spirit strong,  
That gives to all the self-same bent  
Where life is wise and innocent.

## XV.

## THE REDBREAST CHASING THE BUTTERFLY.

[Composed April 18, 1802.—Published 1807.]

ART thou the bird whom Man loves best,  
The pious bird with the scarlet breast,  
Our little English Robin;  
The bird that comes about our doors  
When Autumn-winds are sobbing? 5  
Art thou the Peter of Norway Boors?  
Their Thomas in Finland,  
And Russia far inland?  
The bird that by some name or other  
All men who know thee call their brother, 10  
The darling of children and men?  
Could Father Adam<sup>1</sup> open his eyes  
And see this sight beneath the skies,  
He'd wish to close them again.  
—If the Butterfly knew but his friend, 15  
Hither his flight he would bend;  
And find his way to me,  
Under the branches of the tree:  
In and out, he darts about;  
Can this be the bird, to man so good, 20  
That, after their bewildering,  
Covered with leaves the little children,  
So painfully in the wood?

What ailed thee, Robin, that thou couldst  
pursue  
A beautiful creature, 25  
That is gentle by nature?

<sup>1</sup> See "Paradise Lost," Book XI., where Adam points out to Eve the ominous sign of the Eagle chasing "two Birds of gayest plume," and the gentle Hart and Hind pursued by their enemy.

Beneath the summer sky  
 From flower to flower let him fly;  
 'Tis all that he wishes to do.  
 The cheerer Thou of our in-door sadness, 30  
 He is the friend of our summer gladness:  
 What hinders, then, that ye should be  
 Playmates in the sunny weather,  
 And fly about in the air together!  
 His beautiful wings in crimson are drest, 35  
 A crimson as bright as thine own:  
 Wouldst thou be happy in thy nest,  
 O pious Bird! whom man loves best,  
 Love him, or leave him alone!

## XVI.

## SONG FOR THE SPINNING WHEEL.

FOUNDED UPON A BELIEF PREVALENT AMONG  
 THE PASTORAL VALES OF WESTMORELAND.

[Composed 1812.—Published 1820.]

SWIFTLY turn the murmuring wheel!  
 Night has brought the welcome hour,  
 When the weary fingers feel  
 Help, as if from faery power;  
 Dewy night o'ershades the ground;  
 Turn the swift wheel round and round! 5

Now, beneath the starry sky,  
 Couch the widely-scattered sheep;—  
 Ply the pleasant labour, ply!  
 For the spindle, while they sleep, 10  
 Runs with speed more smooth and fine,  
 Gathering up a trustier line.

Short-lived likings may be bred  
 By a glance from fickle eyes;  
 But true love is like the thread 15  
 Which the kindly wool supplies,  
 When the flocks are all at rest,  
 Sleeping on the mountain's breast.

## XVII.

## HINT FROM THE MOUNTAINS

FOR CERTAIN POLITICAL PRETENDERS.

[Composed 1817.—Published 1820.]

"Who but hails the sight with pleasure  
 When the wings of genius rise,  
 Their ability to measure  
 With great enterprise;

But in man was ne'er such daring 5  
 As yon Hawk exhibits, pairing  
 His brave spirit with the war in  
 The stormy skies!  
 "Mark him, how his power he uses,  
 Lays it by, at will resumes! 10  
 Mark, ere for his haunt he chooses  
 Clouds and utter glooms!  
 There he wheels in downward mazes;  
 Sunward now his flight he raises,  
 Catches fire, as seems, and blazes 15  
 With uninjured plumes!"

## ANSWER.

"Stranger, 'tis no act of courage  
 Which aloft thou dost discern;  
 No bold *bird* gone forth to forage 20  
 'Mid the tempest stern;  
 But such mockery as the nations  
 See, when public perturbations  
 Lift men from their native stations,  
 Like yon TUFT OF FERN;

"Such it is; the aspiring creature 25  
 Soaring on undaunted wing,  
 (So you fancied) is by nature  
 A dull helpless thing,  
 Dry and withered, light and yellow;—  
 That to be the tempest's fellow! 30  
 Wait—and you shall see how hollow  
 Its endeavouring!"

## XVIII.

ON SEEING A NEEDLECASE IN THE  
 FORM OF A HARP.

THE WORK OF E. M. S.

[Composed 1827.—Published 1827.]

FROWNS are on every Muse's face,  
 Reproaches from their lips are sent,  
 That mimicry should thus disgrace  
 The noble Instrument.

A very Harp in all but size! 5  
 Needles for strings in apt gradation!  
 Minerva's self would stigmatize  
 The unclassic profanation.

Even her *own* needle that subdued  
 Arachne's rival spirit, 10  
 Though wrought in Vulcan's happiest  
 mood,  
 Such honour could not merit.

And this too from the Laureate's Child,  
 A living lord of melody !  
 How will her Sire be reconciled 15  
 To the refined indignity ?  
 I spake, when whispered a low voice,  
 "Bard ! moderate your ire ;  
 Spirits of all degrees rejoice  
 In presence of the lyre. 20  
 "The Minstrels of Pygmean bands,  
 Dwarf Genii, moonlight-loving Fays,  
 Have shells to fit their tiny hands  
 And suit their slender lays.  
 "Some, still more delicate of ear, 25  
 Have lutes (believe my words)  
 Whose framework is of gossamer,  
 While sunbeams are the chords.  
 "Gay Sylphs this miniature will court,  
 Made vocal by their brushing wings, 30  
 And sullen Gnomes will learn to sport  
 Around its polished strings ;  
 "Whence strains to love-sick maiden dear,  
 While in her lonely bower she tries  
 To cheat the thought she cannot cheer, 35  
 By fanciful embroideries.  
 "Trust, angry Bard ! a knowing Sprite,  
 Nor think the Harp her lot depletes ;  
 Though 'mid the stars the Lyre shine  
 bright,  
 Love *stoops* as fondly as he soars." 40

## XIX.

## TO A LADY,

IN ANSWER TO A REQUEST THAT I WOULD  
 WRITE HER A POEM UPON SOME DRAWINGS  
 THAT SHE HAD MADE OF FLOWERS IN THE  
 ISLAND OF MADEIRA.

[Composed 1845 (?).—Published 1845.]

FAIR Lady ! can I sing of flowers  
 That in Madeira bloom and fade,  
 I who ne'er sate within their bowers,  
 Nor through their sunny lawns have  
 strayed ?  
 How they in sprightly dance are worn 5  
 By Shepherd-groom or May-day queen,  
 Or holy festal pomps adorn,  
 These eyes have never seen.

Yet tho' to me the pencil's art  
 No like remembrances can give, 10  
 Your portraits still may reach the heart  
 And there for gentle pleasure live ;  
 While Fancy ranging with free scope  
 Shall on some lovely Alien set  
 A name with us endeared to hope, 15  
 To peace, or fond regret.

Still as we look with nicer care,  
 Some new resemblance we may trace  
 A *Heart's-ease* will perhaps be there,  
 A *Speedwell* may not want its place. 20  
 And so may we, with charmed mind  
 Beholding what your skill has wrought,  
 Another *Star-of-Bethlehem* find,  
 A new *Forget-me-not*.

From earth to heaven with motion fleet 25  
 From heaven to earth our thoughts will  
 pass,  
 A *Holy-thistle* here we meet  
 And there a *Shepherd's weather-glass* ;  
 And haply some familiar name  
 Shall grace the fairest, sweetest, plant 30  
 Whose presence cheers the drooping frame  
 Of English Emigrant.

Gazing she feels its power beguile  
 Sad thoughts, and breathes with easier  
 breath ;  
 Alas ! that meek that tender smile 35  
 Is but a harbinger of death :  
 And pointing with a feeble hand  
 She says, in faint words by sighs broken,  
 Bear for me to my native land  
 This precious Flower, true love's last  
 token. 40

## XX.

o

[Composed 1845 (?).—Published 1845.]

GLAD sight wherever new with old  
 Is joined through some dear homeborn  
 tie ;  
 The life of all that we behold  
 Depends upon that mystery.  
 Vain is the glory of the sky, 5  
 The beauty vain of field and grove,  
 Unless, while with admiring eye  
 We gaze, we also learn to love.

## XXI.

## THE CONTRAST.

THE PARROT AND THE WREN.

[Composed 1825.—Published 1827.]

## I.

WITHIN her gilded cage confined  
I saw a dazzling Belle,  
A Parrot of that famous kind  
Whose name is NON-PAREIL.

Like beads of glossy jet her eyes;  
And, smoothed by Nature's skill,  
With pearl or gleaming agate vies  
Her finely-curved bill.

Her plumy mantle's living hues,  
In mass opposed to mass,  
Outshine the splendour that imbues  
The robes of pictured glass.

And, sooth to say, an apter Mate  
Did never tempt the choice  
Of feathered Thing most delicate  
In figure and in voice.

But, exiled from Australian bowers,  
And singleness her lot,  
She trills her song with tutored powers,  
Or mocks each casual note.

No more of pity for regrets  
With which she may have striven!  
Now but in wantonness she frets,  
Or spite, if cause be given;

Arch, volatile, a sportive bird  
By social glee inspired;  
Ambitious to be seen or heard,  
And pleased to be admired!

## II.

THIS moss-lined shed, green, soft, and dry,  
Harbours a self-contented Wren,  
Not shunning man's abode, though shy,  
Almost as thought itself, of human ken.

Strange places, coverts unendured,  
She never tried; the very nest  
In which this Child of Spring was reared  
Is warmed thro' winter by her feathery  
breast.

To the bleak winds she sometimes gives  
A slender unexpected strain;  
Proof that the hermitess still lives,  
Though she appear not, and be sought in  
vain.

Say, Dora! tell me, by yon placid moon,  
If called to choose between the favoured  
pair,

Which would you be,—the bird of the  
saloon,

By lady-fingers tended with nice care,  
Caressed, applauded, upon dainties fed,  
Or Nature's DARLING of this mossy shed?

## XXII.

## THE DANISH BOY.

A FRAGMENT.

[Composed 1799.—Published 1800.]

## I.

BETWEEN two sister moorland rills  
There is a spot that seems to lie  
Sacred to flowerets of the hills,  
And sacred to the sky.  
And in this smooth and open dell  
There is a tempest-stricken tree;  
A corner-stone by lightning cut,  
The last stone of a lonely hut;  
And in this dell you see  
A thing no storm can e'er destroy,  
The shadow of a Danish Boy.

## II.

In clouds above, the lark is heard,  
But drops not here to earth for rest;  
Within this lonesome nook the bird  
Did never build her nest.  
No beast, no bird, hath here his home;  
Bees, wafted on the breezy air,  
Pass high above those fragrant bells  
To other flowers:—to other dells  
Their burdens do they bear;  
The Danish Boy walks here alone:  
The lovely dell is all his own.

## III.

A Spirit of noon-day is he;  
Yet seems a form of flesh and blood;  
Nor piping shepherd shall he be,  
Nor herd-boy of the wood.

A regal vest of fur he wears,  
In colour like a raven's wing;  
It fears not rain, nor wind, nor dew;  
But in the storm 'tis fresh and blue  
As budding pines in spring;  
His helmet has a vernal grace,  
Fresh as the bloom upon his face.

## IV.

A harp is from his shoulder slung;  
Resting the harp upon his knee,  
To words of a forgotten tongue  
He suits its melody.  
Of flocks upon the neighbouring hill  
He is the darling and the joy;  
And often, when no cause appears,  
The mountain-ponies prick their ears,  
—They hear the Danish Boy,  
While in the dell he sings alone  
Beside the tree and corner-stone.

## V.

There sits he; in his face you spy  
No trace of a ferocious air,  
Nor ever was a cloudless sky  
So steady or so fair.  
The lovely Danish Boy is blest  
And happy in his flowery cove:  
From bloody deeds his thoughts are far;  
And yet he warbles songs of war,  
That seem like songs of love,  
For calm and gentle is his mien;  
Like a dead Boy he is serene.

## XXIII.

## SONG

FOR THE WANDERING JEW.

[Composed 1800.—Published 1800.]

THOUGH the torrents from their fountains  
Roar down many a craggy steep,  
Yet they find among the mountains  
Resting-places calm and deep.

Clouds that love through air to hasten,  
Ere the storm its fury stills,  
Helmet-like themselves will fasten  
On the heads of towering hills.

What if through the frozen centre  
Of the Alps the Chamois bound,  
Yet he has a home to enter  
In some nook of chosen ground:

And the Sea-horse, though the ocean  
Yield him no domestic cave,  
Slumbers without sense of motion,  
Couched upon the rocking wave.

If on windy days the Raven  
Gambol like a dancing skiff,  
Not the less she loves her haven  
In the bosom of the cliff.

The fleet Ostrich, till day closes,  
Vagrant over desert sands,  
Brooding on her eggs reposes  
When chill night that care demands.

Day and night my toils redouble,  
Never nearer to the goal;  
Night and day, I feel the trouble  
Of the Wanderer in my soul.

## XXIV.

## STRAY PLEASURES.

[Composed 1806.—Published 1807.]

"—Pleasure is spread through the earth  
In stray gifts to be claimed by whoever shall  
find."

By their floating mill,  
That lies dead and still,  
Behold yon Prisoners three,  
The Miller with two Dames, on the breast  
of the Thames!  
The platform is small, but gives room for  
them all;  
And they're dancing merrily.

From the shore come the notes  
To their mill where it floats,  
To their house and their mill tethered  
fast:

To the small wooden isle where, their  
work to beguile,  
They from morning to even take what-  
ever is given;—  
And many a blithe day they have past.

In sight of the spires,  
All alive with the fires  
Of the sun going down to his rest,  
In the broad open eye of the solitary sky,  
They dance,—there are three, as jocund  
as free,  
While they dance on the calm river's  
breast.

Man and Maidens wheel,  
 They themselves make the reel, 20  
 And their music's a prey which they  
 seize;  
 It plays not for them,—what matter? 'tis  
 theirs;  
 And if they had care, it has scattered  
 their cares  
 While they dance, crying, "Long as ye  
 please!"

They dance not for me, 25  
 Yet mine is their glee!  
 Thus pleasure is spread through the earth  
 In stray gifts to be claimed by whoever  
 shall find;  
 Thus a rich loving-kindness, redundantly  
 kind,  
 Moves all nature to gladness and mirth.

The showers of the spring 31  
 Rouse the birds, and they sing;  
 If the wind do but stir for his proper  
 delight,  
 Each leaf, that and this, his neighbour  
 will kiss;  
 Each wave, one and t'other, speeds after  
 his brother; 35  
 They are happy, for that is their right!

## XXV.

## THE PILGRIM'S DREAM;

OR, THE STAR AND THE GLOW-WORM.

[Composed 1818.—Published 1820.]

A PILGRIM, when the summer day  
 Had closed upon his weary way,  
 A lodging begged beneath a castle's roof;  
 But him the haughty Warder spurned;  
 And from the gate the Pilgrim turned, 5  
 To seek such covert as the field  
 Or heath-besprinkled copse might yield,  
 Or lofty wood, shower-proof.

He paced along; and pensively,  
 Halting beneath a shady tree, 10  
 Whose moss-grown root might serve for  
 couch or seat,  
 Fixed on a Star his upward eye;

Then from the tenant of the sky  
 He turned, and watched with kindred  
 look  
 A Glow-worm, in a dusky nook, 15  
 Apparent at his feet.

The murmur of a neighbouring stream  
 Induced a soft and slumbrous dream,  
 A pregnant dream, within whose shadowy  
 bounds  
 He recognised the earth-born Star, 20  
 And *That* which glittered from afar;  
 And (strange to witness!) from the frame  
 Of the ethereal Orb there came  
 Intelligible sounds.

Much did it taunt the humble Light 25  
 That now, when day was fled, and night  
 Hushed the dark earth, fast closing weary  
 eyes,

A very reptile could presume  
 To show her taper in the gloom,  
 As if in rivalry with One 30  
 Who sat a ruler on his throne  
 Erected in the skies.

"Exalted Star!" the Worm replied,  
 "Abate this unbecoming pride,  
 Or with a less uneasy lustre shine; 35  
 Thou shrink'st as momentarily thy rays  
 Are mastered by the breathing haze;  
 While neither mist, nor thickest cloud  
 That shapes in heaven its murky shroud,  
 Hath power to injure mine. 40

"But not for this do I aspire  
 To match the spark of local fire,  
 That at my will burns on the dewy lawn,  
 With thy acknowledged glories;—No!  
 Yet, thus upbraided, I may show 45  
 What favours do attend me here,  
 Till, like thyself, I disappear  
 Before the purple dawn."

When this in modest guise was said,  
 Across the welkin seemed to spread 50  
 A boding sound—for aught but sleep  
 unfit!

Hills quaked, the rivers backward ran;  
 That Star, so proud of late, looked wan;  
 And reeled with visionary stir  
 In the blue depth, like Lucifer 55  
 Cast headlong to the pit!

Fire raged : and, when the spangled floor  
Of ancient ether was no more,  
New heavens succeeded, by the dream  
brought forth :

And all the happy Souls that rode 60  
Transfigured through that fresh abode  
Had heretofore, in humble trust,  
Shone meekly 'mid their native dust,  
The Glow-worms of the earth !

This knowledge, from an Angel's voice 65  
Proceeding, made the heart rejoice  
Of Him who slept upon the open lea :  
Waking at morn he murmured not ;  
And, till life's journey closed, the spot  
Was to the Pilgrim's soul endeared, 70  
Where by that dream he had been cheered  
Beneath the shady tree.

## XXVI.

THE POET AND THE CAGED  
TURTLEDOVE.

[Composed 1830.—Published 1835.]

As often as I murmur here  
My half-formed melodies,  
Straight from her osier mansion near  
The Turtle-dove replies :  
Though silent as a leaf before, 5  
The captive promptly coos ;  
Is it to teach her own soft lore,  
Or second my weak Muse ?

I rather think the gentle Dove  
Is murmuring a reproof, 10  
Displeased that I from lays of love  
Have dared to keep aloof ;  
That I, a Bard of hill and dale,  
Have carolled, fancy free,  
As if nor dove nor nightingale  
Had heart or voice for me.

If such thy meaning, O forbear,  
Sweet Bird ! to do me wrong ;  
Love, blessed Love, is everywhere  
The spirit of my song : 20  
'Mid grove, and by the calm fireside,  
Love animates my lyre—  
That coo again !—'tis not to chide,  
I feel, but to inspire.

## XXVII.

## A WREN'S NEST.

[Composed 1833.—Published 1835.]

AMONG the dwellings framed by birds  
In field or forest with nice care,  
Is none that with the little Wren's  
In snugness may compare.

No door the tenement requires, 5  
And seldom needs a laboured roof ;  
Yet is it to the fiercest sun  
Impervious, and storm-proof.

So warm, so beautiful withal, 10  
In perfect fitness for its aim,  
That to the Kind by special grace  
Their instinct surely came.

And when for their abodes they seek  
An opportune recess,  
The hermit has no finer eye 15  
For shadowy quietness.

These find, 'mid ivied abbey-walls,  
A canopy in some still nook ;  
Others are pent-housed by a brae  
That overhangs a brook. 20

There to the brooding bird her mate  
Warbles by fits his low clear song ;  
And by the busy streamlet both  
Are sung to all day long.

Or in sequestered lanes they build, 25  
Where, till the flitting bird's return,  
Her eggs within the nest repose,  
Like relics in an urn.

But still, where general choice is good, 30  
There is a better and a best ;  
And, among fairest objects, some  
Are fairer than the rest ; 15

This, one of those small builders proved  
In a green covert, where, from out  
The forehead of a pollard oak, 35  
The leafy antlers sprout ;

For She who planned the mossy lodge,  
Mistrusting her evasive skill,  
Had to a Primrose looked for aid  
Her wishes to fulfil. 40

High on the trunk's projecting brow,  
And fixed an infant's span above  
The budding flowers, peeped forth the  
nest  
The prettiest of the grove!

The treasure proudly did I show 45  
To some whose minds without disdain  
Can turn to little things; but once  
Looked up for it in vain:

'Tis gone—a ruthless spoiler's prey,  
Who heeds not beauty, love, or song, 50  
'Tis gone! (so seemed it) and we grieved  
Indignant at the wrong.

Just three days after, passing by  
In clearer light the moss-built cell  
I saw, espied its shaded mouth; 55  
And felt that all was well.

The Primrose for a veil had spread  
The largest of her upright leaves;  
And thus, for purposes benign, 60  
A simple flower deceives.

Concealed from friends who might disturb  
Thy quiet with no ill intent,  
Secure from evil eyes and hands  
On barbarous plunder bent, 64

Rest, Mother-bird! and when thy young  
Take flight, and thou art free to roam,  
When withered is the guardian Flower,  
And empty thy late home,

Think how ye prospered, thou and thine,  
Amid the unviolated grove 70  
Housed near the growing Primrose-tuft  
In foresight, or in love.

## XXVIII.

## LOVE LIES BLEEDING.

[Composed 1842 (?).—Published 1842.]

You call it, "Love lies bleeding,"—so you  
may,  
Though the red Flower, not prostrate,  
only droops,  
As we have seen it here from day to day,  
From month to month, life passing not  
away:  
A flower how rich in sadness! Even thus  
stoops, 5

(Sentient by Grecian sculpture's mar-  
vellous power),  
Thus leans, with hanging brow and body  
bent

Earthward in uncomplaining languish-  
ment,

The dying Gladiator. So, sad Flower!  
( 'Tis Fancy guides me willing to be led, 10  
Though by a slender thread, )  
So drooped Adonis, bathed in sanguine  
dew

Of his death-wound, when he from in-  
nocent air

The gentlest breath of resignation drew;  
While Venus in a passion of despair 15  
Rent, weeping over him, her golden hair  
Spangled with drops of that celestial  
shower.

She suffered, as Immortals sometimes do;  
But pangs more lasting far *that* Lover  
knew

Who first, weighed down by scorn, in  
some lone bower 20

Did press this semblance of unpitied  
smart

Into the service of his constant heart,  
His own dejection, downcast Flower!  
could share

With thine, and gave the mournful name  
which thou wilt ever bear. 24

## XXIX.

## COMPANION TO THE FOREGOING.

[Composed 1842 (?).—Published 1842.]

NEVER enlivened with the liveliest ray  
That fosters growth or checks or cheers  
decay,

Nor by the heaviest rain-drops more  
deprest,

This Flower, that first appeared as sum-  
mer's guest,

Preserves her beauty 'mid autumnal  
leaves, 5

And to her mournful habits fondly  
cleaves.

When files of stateliest plants have ceased  
to bloom,

One after one submitting to their doom,

When her coevals each and all are fled,  
What keeps her thus reclined upon her  
lonesome bed? 10

The old mythologists, more impressed  
than we  
Of this late day by character in tree  
Or herb that claimed peculiar sympathy,  
Or by the silent lapse of fountain clear,  
Or with the language of the viewless air 15  
By bird or beast made vocal, sought a  
cause

To solve the mystery, not in Nature's laws  
But in Man's fortunes. Hence a thousand  
tales

Sung to the plaintive lyre in Grecian vales.  
Nor doubt that something of their spirit  
swayed 20

The fancy-stricken Youth or heart-sick  
Maid,

Who, while each stood companionless and  
eyed

This undeparting Flower in crimson dyed,  
Thought of a wound which death is slow  
to cure, 24

A fate that has endured and will endure,  
And, patience coveting yet passion feeding,  
Called the dejected Lingerer *Love lies  
Bleeding.*

### XXX.

#### RURAL ILLUSIONS.

[Composed 1832.—Published 1835.]

SYLPH was it? or a Bird mere bright  
Than those of fabulous stock?

A second darted by;—and lo!

Another of the flock,  
Through sunshine flitting from the bough  
To nestle in the rock. 6

Transient deception! a gay freak  
Of April's mimicries!

Those brilliant strangers, hailed with joy  
Among the budding trees, 10

Proved last year's leaves, pushed from the  
spray

To frolic on the breeze.

Maternal Flora! show thy face,  
And let thy hand be seen,

Thy hand here sprinkling tiny flowers, 15

That, as they touch the green,  
Take root (so seems it) and look up  
In honour of their Queen.

Yet, sooth, those little starry specks,  
That not in vain aspired 20

To be confounded with live growths,  
Most dainty, most admired,  
Were only blossoms dropped from twigs  
Of their own offspring tired.

Not such the World's illusive shows; 25  
Her wingless flutterings,

Her blossoms which, though shed, out-  
brave

The floweret as it springs,  
For the undeceived, smile as they may,  
Are melancholy things: 30

But gentle Nature plays her part  
With ever-varying wiles,  
And transient feignings with plain truth  
So well she reconciles,

That those fond Idlers most are pleased 35  
Whom oftenest she beguiles.

### XXXI.

#### THE KITTEN AND FALLING LEAVES.

[Composed 1804.—Published 1807.]

THAT way look, my Infant, lo!

What a pretty baby-show!

See the Kitten on the wall,

Sporting with the leaves that fall,

Withered leaves—one—two—and three— 5  
From the lofty elder-tree!

Through the calm and frosty air  
Of this morning bright and fair,  
Eddying round and round they sink

Softly, slowly: one might think, 10  
From the motions that are made,

Every little leaf conveyed  
Sylph or Faery hither tending,—  
To this lower world descending,

Each invisible and mute, 15  
In his wavering parachute.

—But the Kitten, how she starts,  
Crouches, stretches, paws, and darts!

First at one, and then its fellow, 20  
Just as light and just as yellow;

There are many now—now one—  
Now they stop and there are none:

- What intenseness of desire  
In her upward eye of fire !  
With a tiger-leap half-way  
Now she meets the coming prey,  
Lets it go as fast, and then  
Has it in her power again :  
Now she works with three or four,  
Like an Indian conjurer ;  
Quick as he in feats of art,  
Far beyond in joy of heart.  
Were her antics played in the eye  
Of a thousand standers-by,  
Clapping hands with shout and stare,  
What would little Tabby care  
For the plaudits of the crowd ?  
Over happy to be proud,  
Over wealthy in the treasure  
Of her own exceeding pleasure !
- 'Tis a pretty baby-treat ;  
Nor, I deem, for me unmeet ;  
Here, for neither Babe nor me,  
Other playmate can I see.  
Of the countless living things,  
That with stir of feet and wings  
(In the sun or under shade,  
Upon bough or grassy blade)  
And with busy revellings,  
Chirp and song, and murmurings,  
Made this orchard's narrow space,  
And this vale, so blithe a place ;  
Multitudes are swept away  
Never more to breathe the day :  
Some are sleeping ; some in bands  
Travelled into distant lands ;  
Others slunk to moor and wood,  
Far from human neighbourhood ;  
And among the Kinds that keep  
With us closer fellowship,  
With us openly abide,  
All have laid their mirth aside.
- Where is he that giddy Sprite,  
Blue-cap, with his colours bright,  
Who was blest as bird could be,  
Feeding in the apple-tree ;  
Made such wanton spoil and rout,  
Turning blossoms inside out ;  
Hung—head pointing towards the ground—  
Fluttered, perched, into a round  
Bound himself, and then unbound ;
- Lithest, gaudiest Hariequin !  
Prettiest Tumbler ever seen !  
Light of heart and light of limb ;  
What is now become of Him ?  
Lambs, that through the mountains  
went  
Frisking, bleating merriment,  
When the year was in its prime,  
They are sobered by this time.  
If you look to vale or hill,  
If you listen, all is still,  
Save a little neighbouring rill,  
That from out the rocky ground  
Strikes a solitary sound.  
Vainly glitter hill and plain,  
And the air is calm in vain ;  
Vainly Morning spreads the lure  
Of a sky serene and pure ;  
Creature none can she decoy  
Into open sign of joy :  
Is it that they have a fear  
Of the dreary season near ?  
Or that other pleasures be  
Sweeter even than gaiety ?
- Yet, whate'er enjoyments dwell  
In the impenetrable cell  
Of the silent heart which Nature  
Furnishes to every creature ;  
Whatsoever we feel and know  
Too sedate for outward show,  
Such a light of gladness breaks,  
Pretty Kitten ! from thy freaks,—  
Spreads with such a living grace  
O'er my little Dora's face ;  
Yea, the sight so stirs and charms  
Thee, Baby, laughing in my arms,  
That almost I could repine  
That your transports are not mine,  
That I do not wholly fare  
Even as ye do, thoughtless pair !  
And I will have my careless season  
Spite of melancholy reason,  
Will walk through life in such a way  
That, when time brings on decay,  
Now and then I may possess  
Hours of perfect gladness.  
—Pleased by any random toy ;  
By a kitten's busy joy,  
Or an infant's laughing eye  
Sharing in the ecstasy ;

I would fare like that or this;  
Find my wisdom in my bliss;  
Keep the sprightly soul awake,  
And have faculties to take,  
Even from things by sorrow wrought, 125  
Matter for a jocund thought,  
Spite of care, and spite of grief,  
To gambol with Life's falling Leaf.

## XXXII.

ADDRESS TO MY INFANT  
DAUGHTER, DORA,

ON BEING REMINDED THAT SHE WAS A  
MONTH OLD THAT DAY, SEPTEMBER 16.

[Composed September 18, 1894.—Published 1815.]

—Hast thou then survived—  
Mild Offspring of infirm humanity,  
Meek Infant! among all forlornest things  
The most forlorn—one life of that bright  
star,  
The second glory of the Heavens?—Thou  
hast; 5  
Already hast survived that great decay,  
That transformation through the wide  
earth felt,  
And by all nations. In that Being's sight  
From whom the Race of human kind  
proceed,  
A thousand years are but as yesterday; 10  
And one day's narrow circuit is to Him  
Not less capacious than a thousand years.  
But what is time? What outward glory?  
Neither  
A measure is of Thee, whose claims extend  
Through "heaven's eternal year."—Yet  
hail to Thee, 15  
Frail, feeble, Monthling!—by that name,  
methinks,  
Thy scanty breathing-time is portioned  
out  
Not idly.—Hadst thou been of Indian  
birth,  
Couched on a casual bed of moss and  
leaves,  
And rudely canopied by leafy boughs, 20  
Or to the churlish elements exposed  
On the blank plains,—the coldness of the  
night,  
Or the night's darkness, or its cheerful face

Of beauty, by the changing moon adorned,  
Would, with imperious admonition, then  
Have scored thine age, and punctually  
timed 25  
Thine infant history, on the minds of  
those  
Who might have wandered with thee.—  
Mother's love,  
Nor less than mother's love in other  
breasts,  
Will, among us warm-clad and warmly  
housed, 30  
Do for thee what the finger of the heavens  
Doth all too often harshly execute  
For thy unblest coevals, amid wilds  
Where fancy hath small liberty to grace  
The affections, to exalt them or refine; 35  
And the maternal sympathy itself,  
Though strong, is, in the main, a joyless  
tie  
Of naked instinct, wound about the heart.  
Happier, far happier is thy lot and ours!  
Even now—to solemnise thy helpless  
state, 40  
And to enliven in the mind's regard  
Thy passive beauty—parallels have risen,  
Resemblances, or contrasts, that connect,  
Within the region of a father's thoughts,  
Thee and thy mate and sister of the sky.  
And first;—thy sinless progress, through  
a world 46  
By sorrow darkened and by care dis-  
turbed,  
Apt likeness bears to hers, through  
gathered clouds  
Moving untouched in silver purity,  
And cheering oft-times their reluctant  
gloom. 50  
Fair are ye both, and both are free from  
stain:  
But thou, how leisurely thou fill'st thy  
horn  
With brightness! leaving her to post  
along,  
And range about, disquieted in change,  
And still impatient of the shape she  
wears. 55  
Once up, once down the hill, one journey,  
Babe,  
That will suffice thee; and it seems that  
now

Thou hast foreknowledge that such task  
is thine;  
Thou travellest so contentedly, and  
sleep'st 59  
In such a heedless peace. Alas! full soon  
Hath this conception, grateful to behold,  
Changed countenance, like an object  
sullied o'er  
By breathing mist; and thine appears  
to be  
A mournful labour, while to her is given  
Hope, and a renovation without end. 65  
—That smile forbids the thought; for on  
thy face  
Smiles are beginning, like the beams of  
dawn,  
To shoot and circulate; smiles have there  
been seen;  
Tranquil assurances that Heaven supports  
The feeble motions of thy life, and cheers  
Thy loneliness: or shall those smiles be  
called 71  
Feelers of love, put forth as if to explore  
This untried world, and to prepare thy  
way  
Through a strait passage intricate and  
dim?  
Such are they; and the same are tokens,  
signs, 75  
Which, when the appointed season hath  
arrived,  
Joy, as her holiest language, shall adopt;  
And Reason's godlike Power be proud to  
own.

XXXIII.

THE WAGGONER.

[Composed 1805.—Published 1819.]

● "In Cairo's crowded streets  
The impatient Merchant, wondering, waits in vain,  
And Mecca saddens at the long delay."

THOMSON.

TO CHARLES LAMB, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND,  
When I sent you, a few weeks ago, the  
Tale of Peter Bell, you asked "why THE  
WAGGONER was not added?"—To say the truth,  
—from the higher tone of imagination, and  
the deeper touches of passion aimed at in the  
former, I apprehended this little Piece could not

accompany it without disadvantage. In the  
year 1808, if I am not mistaken, THE WAG-  
GONER was read to you in manuscript, and, as  
you have remembered it for so long a time. I  
am the more encouraged to hope that, since  
the localities on which the Poem partly depends  
did not prevent its being interesting to you, it  
may prove acceptable to others. Being there-  
fore in some measure the cause of its present  
appearance, you must allow me the gratification  
of inscribing it to you; in acknowledgment of  
the pleasure I have derived from your Writings,  
and of the high esteem with which

I am very truly yours,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, May 20, 1819.

Canto First.

'Tis spent—this burning day of June!  
Soft darkness o'er its latest gleams is  
stealing;  
The buzzing dor-hawk, round and round,  
is wheeling,—  
That solitary bird  
Is all that can be heard 5  
In silence deeper far than that of deepest  
noon!

Confiding Glow-worms, 'tis a night  
Propitious to your earth-born light!  
But where the scattered stars are seen  
In hazy straits the clouds between, 10  
Each, in his station twinkling not,  
Seems changed into a pallid spot.  
The mountains against heaven's grave  
weight  
Rise up, and grow to wondrous height.  
The air, as in a lion's den, 15  
Is close and hot;—and now and then  
Comes a tired and sultry breeze  
With a haunting and a panting,  
Like the stifling of disease;  
But the dews allay the heat, 20  
And the silence makes it sweet.

Hush, there is some one on the stir!  
'Tis Benjamin the Waggoner;  
Who long hath trod this toilsome way,  
Companion of the night and day. 25  
That far-off tinkling's drowsy cheer,  
Mixed with a faint yet grating sound  
In a moment lost and found,

The Wain announces—by whose side  
 Along the banks of Rydal Mere 30  
 He paces on, a trusty Guide,—  
 Listen! you can scarcely hear!  
 Hither he his course is bending;—  
 Now he leaves the lower ground,  
 And up the craggy hill ascending 35  
 Many a stop and stay he makes,  
 Many a breathing-fit he takes;  
 Steep the way and wearisome,  
 Yet all the while his whip is dumb!

The Horses have worked with right  
 good-will, 40  
 And so have gained the top of the hill;  
 He was patient, they were strong,  
 And now they smoothly glide along,  
 Recovering breath, and pleased to win  
 The praises of mild Benjamin. 45  
 Heaven shield him from mishap and  
 snare!

But why so early with this prayer?—  
 Is it for threatenings in the sky?  
 Or for some other danger nigh?  
 No; none is near him yet, though he 50  
 Be one of much infirmity;  
 For at the bottom of the brow,  
 Where once the DOVE and OLIVE-BOUGH  
 Offered a greeting of good ale  
 To all who entered Grasmere Vale; 55  
 And called on him who must depart  
 To leave it with a jovial heart;  
 There, where the DOVE and OLIVE-BOUGH  
 Once hung, a Poet harbours now,  
 A simple water-drinking Bard; 60  
 Why need our Hero then (though frail  
 His best resolves) be on his guard?  
 He marches by, secure and bold;  
 Yet, while he thinks on times of old,  
 It seems that all looks wondrous cold; 65  
 He shrugs his shoulders, shakes his head,  
 And, for the honest folk within,  
 It is a doubt with Benjamin  
 Whether they be alive or dead!

Here is no danger,—none at all! 70  
 Beyond his wish he walks secure;  
 But pass a mile—and then for trial,—  
 Then for the pride of self-denial;  
 If he resist that tempting door,  
 Which with such friendly voice will call;

If he resist those casement panes, 75  
 And that bright gleam which thence will  
 fall  
 Upon his Leaders' bells and manes,  
 Inviting him with cheerful lure:  
 For still, though all be dark elsewhere, 80  
 Some shining notice will be there,  
 Of open house and ready fare.

The place to Benjamin right well  
 Is known, and by as strong a spell  
 As used to be that sign of love 85  
 And hope—the OLIVE-BOUGH and DOVE;  
 He knows it to his cost, good Man!  
 Who does not know the famous SWAN?  
 Object uncouth! and yet our boast,  
 For it was painted by the Host; 90  
 His own conceit the figure planned,  
 'Twas coloured all by his own hand;  
 And that frail Child of thirsty clay,  
 Of whom I sing this rustic lay,  
 Could tell with self-dissatisfaction 95  
 Quaint stories of the bird's attraction!<sup>1</sup>

Well! that is past—and in despite  
 Of open door and shining light.  
 And now the conqueror essays  
 The long ascent of Dunmail-raise; 100  
 And with his team is gentle here  
 As when he clomb from Rydal Mere;  
 His whip they do not dread—his voice  
 They only hear it to rejoice.  
 To stand or go is at their pleasure; 105  
 Their efforts and their time they measure  
 By generous pride within the breast;  
 And while they strain, and while they rest,  
 He thus pursues his thoughts at leisure.

Now am I fairly safe to-night— 110  
 And with proud cause my heart is light:  
 I trespassed lately worse than ever—  
 But Heaven has blest a good endeavour;  
 And, to my soul's content, I find  
 The evil One is left behind. 115  
 Yes, let my master fume and fret,  
 Here am I—with my horses yet!  
 My jolly team, he finds that ye  
 Will work for nobody but me!

<sup>1</sup> This rude piece of self-taught art (such is the progress of refinement) has been supplanted by a professional production.

Full proof of this the Country gained ; 120  
 It knows how ye were vexed and strained,  
 And forced unworthy stripes to bear,  
 When trusted to another's care.  
 Here was it—on this rugged slope,  
 Which now ye climb with heart and  
     hope, 125

I saw you, between rage and fear,  
 Plunge, and fling back a spiteful ear,  
 And ever more and more confused,  
 As ye were more and more abused :  
 As chance would have it, passing by 130  
 I saw you in that jeopardy :  
 A word from me was like a charm ;  
 Ye pulled together with one mind ;  
 And your huge burthen, safe from harm,  
 Moved like a vessel in the wind ! 135  
 —Yes, without me, up hills so high  
 'Tis vain to strive for mastery.

Then grieve not, jolly team ! though  
     tough

The road we travel, steep, and rough ;  
 Though Rydal-heights and Dunmail-raise,  
 And all their fellow banks and braes, 141  
 Full often make you stretch and strain,  
 And halt for breath and halt again,  
 Yet to their sturdiness 'tis owing  
 That side by side we still are going ! 145

While Benjamin in earnest mood  
 His meditations thus pursued,  
 A storm, which had been smothered long,  
 Was growing inwardly more strong ;  
 And, in its struggles to get free, 150  
 Was busily employed as he.  
 The thunder had begun to growl—  
 He heard not, too intent of soul ;  
 The air was now without a breath—  
 He marked not that 'twas still as death.  
 But soon large rain-drops on his head 156  
 Fell with the weight of drops of lead ;—  
 He starts—and takes, at the admonition,  
 A sage survey of his condition.  
 The road is black before his eyes, 160  
 Glimmering faintly where it lies ;  
 Black is the sky—and every hill,  
 Up to the sky, is blacker still—  
 Sky, hill, and dale, one dismal room,  
 Hung round and overhung with gloom ;  
 Save that above a single height 166  
 Is to be seen a lurid light,

Above Helm-crag<sup>1</sup>—a streak half dead,  
 A burning of portentous red ;  
 And near that lurid light, full well 170  
 The ASTROLOGER, sage Sidrophel,  
 Where at his desk and book he sits,  
 Puzzling aloft his curious wits ;  
 He whose domain is held in common  
 With no one but the ANCIENT WOMAN, 175  
 Cowering beside her rifted cell,  
 As if intent on magic spell ;—  
 Dread pair that, spite of wind and wea-  
     ther,  
 Still sit upon Helm-crag together !

The ASTROLOGER was not unseen 180  
 By solitary Benjamin ;  
 But total darkness came anon,  
 And he and every thing was gone :  
 And suddenly a ruffling breeze,  
 (That would have rocked the sounding  
     trees, 185

Had aught of sylvan growth been there),  
 Swept through the Hollow long and bare :  
 The rain rushed down—the road was  
     battered,

As with the force of billows shattered ;  
 The horses are dismayed, nor know 190  
 Whether they should stand or go ;  
 And Benjamin is groping near them,  
 Sees nothing, and can scarcely hear them.  
 He is astounded,—wonder not,—  
 With such a charge in such a spot ; 195  
 Astounded in the mountain gap  
 With thunder-peals, clap after clap,  
 Close-treading on the silent flashes—  
 And somewhere, as he thinks, by crashes  
 Among the rocks ; with weight of rain,  
 And sullen motions long and slow, 201  
 That to a dreary distance go—  
 Till, breaking in upon the dying strain,  
 A rending o'er his head begins the fray  
     again.

Meanwhile, uncertain what to do, 205  
 And oftentimes compelled to halt,  
 The horses cautiously pursue  
 Their way, without mishap or fault ;

<sup>1</sup> A mountain of Grasmere, the broken summit  
 of which presents two figures, full as distinctly  
 shaped as that of the famous Cobbler near Ar-  
 roquhar in Scotland.

And now have reached that pile of stones,  
Heaped over brave King Dunmail's bones,  
He who had once supreme command, 211  
Last king of rocky Cumberland;  
His bones, and those of all his Power,  
Slain here in a disastrous hour!

When, passing through this narrow  
strait, 215  
Stony, and dark, and desolate,  
Benjamin can faintly hear  
A voice that comes from some one near,  
A female voice:—"Whoe'er you be,  
Stop," it exclaimed, "and pity me!" 220  
And less in pity than in wonder,  
Amid the darkness and the thunder,  
The Waggoner, with prompt command,  
Summons his horses to a stand.

While, with increasing agitation, 225  
The Woman urged her supplication,  
In rueful words, with sobs between—  
The voice of tears that fell unseen;  
There came a flash—a startling glare,  
And all Seat-Sandal was laid bare! 230  
'Tis not a time for nice suggestion,  
And Benjamin, without a question,  
Taking her for some way-worn rover,  
Said, "Mount, and get you under cover!"

Another voice, in tone as hoarse 235  
As a swollen brook with rugged course,  
Cried out, "Good brother, why so fast?  
I've had a glimpse of you—*avast!*  
Or, since it suits you to be civil,  
Take her at once—for good and evil!" 240

"It is my Husband," softly said  
The Woman, as if half afraid:  
By this time she was snug within,  
Through help of honest Benjamin;  
She and her Babe, which to her breast 245  
With thankfulness the Mother pressed;  
And now the same strong voice more near  
Said cordially, "My Friend, what cheer?  
Rough doings these! as God's my judge,  
The sky owes somebody a grudge!" 250  
We've had in half an hour or less  
A twelvemonth's terror and distress!"

Then Benjamin entreats the Man  
Would mount, too, quickly as he can:  
The Sailor—Sailor now no more, 255  
But such he had been heretofore—

To courteous Benjamin replied,  
"Go you your way, and mind not me;  
For I must have, whate'er betide,  
My Ass and fifty things beside,— 260  
Go, and I'll follow speedily!"

The Waggon moves—and with its load  
Descends along the sloping road;  
And the rough Sailor instantly  
Turns to a little tent hard by: 265  
For when, at closing-in of day,  
The family had come that way,  
Green pasture and the soft warm air  
Tempted them to settle there.—  
Green is the grass for beast to graze, 270  
Around the stones of Dunmail-raise!

The Sailor gathers up his bed,  
Takes down the canvas overhead;  
And after farewell to the place,  
A parting word—though not of grace, 275  
Pursues, with Ass and all his store,  
The way the Waggon went before.

### Canto Second.

If Wytheburne's modest House of prayer,  
As lowly as the lowliest dwelling,  
Had, with its belfry's humble stock,  
A little pair that hang in air,  
Been mistress also of a clock, 5  
(And one, too, not in crazy plight),  
Twelve strokes that clock would have  
been telling  
Under the brow of old Helvellyn—  
Its bead-roll of midnight,  
Then, when the Hero of my tale 10  
Was passing by, and, down the vale  
(The vale now silent, hushed, I ween,  
As if a storm had never been)  
Proceeding with a mind at ease;  
While the old Familiar of the seas, 15  
Intent to use his utmost haste,  
Gained ground upon the Waggon fast,  
And gives another lusty cheer;  
For, spite of rumbling of the wheels,  
A welcome greeting he can hear;— 20  
It is a fiddle in its glee  
Dinning from the CHERRY TREE!

Thence the sound—the light is there—  
As Benjamin is now aware,  
Who, to his inward thoughts confined, 25

Had almost reached the festive door,  
When, startled by the Sailor's roar,  
He hears a sound and sees the light,  
And in a moment calls to mind  
That 'tis the village MERRY-NIGHT!<sup>1</sup>

Although before in no dejection,  
At this insidious recollection  
His heart with sudden joy is filled,—  
His ears are by the music thrilled,  
His eyes take pleasure in the road  
Glittering before him bright and broad;  
And Benjamin is wet and cold,  
And there are reasons manifold  
That make the good, tow'ards which he's  
yearning,

Look fairly like a lawful earning.

Nor has thought time to come and go,  
To vibrate between yes and no;  
For, cries the Sailor, "Glorious chance  
That blew us hither!—let him dance,  
Who can or will!—my honest soul,  
Our treat shall be a friendly bowl!"  
He draws him to the door—"Come in,  
Come, come," cries he to Benjamin!  
And Benjamin—ah, woe is me!  
Gave the word—the horses heard  
And halted, though reluctantly.

"Blithe souls and lightsome hearts have  
we

Feasting at the CHERRY TREE!"  
This was the outside proclamation,  
This was the inside salutation;  
What bustling—jostling—high and low!  
A universal overflow!  
What tankards foaming from the tap!  
What store of cakes in every lap!  
What thumping—stumping—overhead!  
The thunder had not been more busy:  
With such a stir you would have said,  
This little place may well be dizzy!  
'Tis who can dance with greatest vigour—  
'Tis what can be most prompt and eager;  
As if it heard the fiddle's call,  
The pewter clatters on the wall;  
The very bacon shows its feeling,  
Swinging from the smoky ceiling!

<sup>1</sup> A term well known in the North of England, and applied to rural Festivals where young persons meet in the evening for the purpose of dancing.

A steaming bowl, a blazing fire,  
What greater good can heart desire?  
'Twere worth a wise man's while to try  
The utmost anger of the sky:  
To seek for thoughts of a gloomy cast,  
If such the bright amends at last,  
Now should you say I judge amiss,  
The CHERRY TREE shows proof of this;  
For soon, of all the happy there,  
Our Travellers are the happiest pair;  
All care with Benjamin is gone—  
A Cæsar past the Rubicon!  
He thinks not of his long, long, strife;—  
The Sailor, Man by nature gay,  
Hath no resolves to throw away;  
And he hath now forgot his Wife,  
Hath quite forgotten her—or may be  
Thinks her the luckiest soul on earth,  
Within that warm and peaceful berth,  
Under cover,  
Terror over,  
Sleeping by her sleeping Baby.

With bowl that sped from hand to hand,  
The gladdest of the gladsome band,  
Amid their own delight and fun,  
They hear—when every dance is done,  
When every whirling bout is o'er—  
The fiddle's *squeak*<sup>2</sup>—that call to bliss,  
Ever followed by a kiss;  
They envy not the happy lot,  
But enjoy their own the more!

While thus our jocund Travellers fare,  
Up springs the Sailor from his chair—  
Limps (for I might have told before  
That he was lame) across the floor—  
Is gone—returns—and with a prize;  
With what?—a Ship of lusty size;  
A gallant stately Man-of-war,  
Fixed on a smoothly-sliding car.  
Surprise to all, but most surprise  
To Benjamin, who rubs his eyes,  
Not knowing that he had befriended  
A Man so gloriously attended!

"This," cries the Sailor, "a Third-rate  
is—  
Stand back, and you shall see her gratis!

<sup>2</sup> At the close of each strathspey, or jig, a particular note from the fiddle summons the Rustic to the agreeable duty of saluting his partner.

This was the Flag-ship at the Nile, 115  
The VANGUARD—you may smirk and smile,

But, pretty Maid, if you look near,  
You'll find you're much in little here !  
A nobler ship did never swim,  
And you shall see her in full trim : 120  
I'll set, my friends, to do you honour,  
Set every inch of sail upon her."  
So said, so done ; and masts, sails, yards,  
He names them all ; and interlards  
His speech with uncouth terms of art, 125  
Accomplished in the showman's part ;  
And then, as from a sudden check,  
Cries out—" 'Tis there, the quarter-deck  
On which brave Admiral Nelson stood—  
A sight that would have roused your  
blood ! 130

One eye he had, which, bright as ten,  
Burned like a fire among his men ;  
Let this be land, and that be sea,  
Here lay the French—and *thus* came we !"

Hushed was by this the fiddle's sound,  
The dancers all were gathered round, 136  
And such the stillness of the house,  
You might have heard a nibbling mouse ;  
While, borrowing helps where'er he may,  
The Sailor through the story runs 140  
Of ships to ships and guns to guns ;  
And does his utmost to display  
The dismal conflict, and the might  
And terror of that marvellous night !  
"A bowl, a bowl of double measure," 145  
Cries Benjamin, "a draught of length !  
To Nelson, England's pride and treasure,  
Her bulwark and her tower of strength !"  
When Benjamin had seized the bowl,  
The mastiff, from beneath the waggon,  
Where he lay, watchful as a dragon, 151  
Rattled his chain ;—'twas all in vain,  
For Benjamin, triumphant soul !  
He heard the monitory growl ;  
Heard—and in opposition quaffed 155  
A deep, determined, desperate draught !  
Nor did the battered Tar forget,  
Or flinch from what he deemed his debt :  
Then, like a hero crowned with laurel,  
Back to her place the ship he led ; 160  
Wheeled her back in full apparel ;  
And so, flag flying at mast head,

Re-yoked her to the Ass :—anon  
Cries Benjamin, "We must be gone."  
Thus, after two hours' hearty stay, 165  
Again behold them on their way !

### Canto Third.

RIGHT gladly had the horses stirred,  
When they the wished-for greeting heard,  
The whip's loud notice from the door,  
That they were free to move once more.  
You think, those doings must have bred ;  
In them disheartening doubts and dread ;  
No, not a horse of all the eight,  
Although it be a moonless night,  
Fears either for himself or freight ;  
For this they know (and let it hide, 10  
In part, the offences of their guide)  
That Benjamin, with clouded brains,  
Is worth the best with all their pains ;  
And, if they had a prayer to make,  
The prayer would be that they may take  
With him whatever comes in course, 16  
The better fortune or the worse ;  
That no one else may have business near  
them,  
And, drunk or sober, he may steer them.

So forth in dauntless mood they fare, 20  
And with them goes the guardian pair.

Now, heroes, for the true commotion,  
The triumph of your late devotion !  
Can aught on earth impede delight,  
Still mounting to a higher height ; 25  
And higher still—a greedy flight !  
Can any low-born care pursue her,  
Can any mortal clog come to her ?  
No notion have they—not a thought,  
That is from joyless regions brought ! 30  
And, while they coast the silent lake,  
Their inspiration I partake ;  
Share their empyreal spirits—yea,  
With their enraptured vision see—  
O fancy—what a jubilee ! 35  
What shifting pictures—clad in gleams  
Of colour bright as feverish dreams !  
Earth, spangled sky, and lake serene,  
Involved and restless all—a scene  
Pregnant with mutual exaltation, 40  
Rich change, and multiplied creation !  
This sight to me the Muse imparts ;—  
And then, what kindness in their hearts !

What tears of rapture, what vow-making,  
 Profound entreaties, and hand-shaking !  
 What solemn, vacant, interlacing, 45  
 As if they'd fall asleep embracing !  
 Then, in the turbulence of glee,  
 And in the excess of amity,  
 Says Benjamin, "That Ass of thine, 50  
 He spoils thy sport, and hinders mine :  
 If he were tethered to the waggon,  
 He'd drag as well what he is dragging ;  
 And we, as brother should with brother,  
 Might trudge it alongside each other !" 55

Forthwith, obedient to command,  
 The horses made a quiet stand ;  
 And to the waggon's skirts was tied  
 The Creature, by the Mastiff's side,  
 The Mastiff wondering, and perplex 60  
 With dread of what will happen next ;  
 And thinking it but sorry cheer  
 To have such company so near !

This new arrangement made, the Wain  
 Through the still night proceeds again ;  
 No moon hath risen her light to lend ; 66  
 But indistinctly may be kenned  
 The VANGUARD, following close behind,  
 Sails spread, as if to catch the wind !

"Thy wife and child are snug and  
 warm, 70  
 Thy ship will travel without harm ;  
 I like," said Benjamin, "her shape and  
 stature :  
 And this of mine—this bulky creature  
 Of which I have the steering—this,  
 Seen fairly, is not much amiss ! 75  
 We want your streamers, friend, you  
 know ;  
 But, altogether as we go,  
 We make a kind of handsome show !  
 Among these hills, from first to last,  
 We've weathered many a furious blast ;  
 Hard passage forcing on, with head 81  
 Against the storm, and canvas spread.  
 I hate a boaster ; but to thee  
 Will say't, who know'st both land and  
 sea,  
 The unluckiest hulk that stems the brine  
 Is hardly worse beset than mine, 86  
 When cross-winds on her quarter beat ;  
 And, fairly lifted from my feet,

I stagger onward—heaven knows how ;  
 But not so pleasantly as now : 90  
 Poor pilot I, by snows confounded,  
 And many a foundrous pit surrounded !  
 Yet here we are, by night and day  
 Grinding through rough and smooth our  
 way ; 94  
 Through foul and fair our task fulfilling ;  
 And long shall be so yet—God willing !"  
 "Ay," said the Tar, "through fair and  
 foul—

But save us from yon screeching owl !"  
 That instant was begun a fray  
 Which called their thoughts another way :  
 The Mastiff, ill-conditioned carl ! 101  
 What must he do but growl and snarl,  
 Still more and more dissatisfied  
 With the meek comrade at his side !  
 Till, not incensed though put to proof, 105  
 The Ass, uplifting a hind hoof,  
 Salutes the Mastiff on the head ;  
 And so were better manners bred,  
 And all was calmed and quieted.

"Yon screech-owl," says the Sailor,  
 turning 110  
 Back to his former cause of mourning,  
 "Yon owl !—pray God that all be well !  
 'Tis worse than any funeral bell ;  
 As sure as I've the gift of sight,  
 We shall be meeting ghosts to-night !" 115  
 —Said Benjamin, "This whip shall lay  
 A thousand, if they cross our way.  
 I know that Wanton's noisy station,  
 I know him and his occupation ;  
 The jolly bird hath learned his cheer 120  
 Upon the banks of Windermere ;  
 Where a tribe of them make merry,  
 Mocking the Man that keeps the ferry ;  
 Hallooing from an open throat,  
 Like travellers shouting for a boat. 125  
 —The tricks he learned at Windermere  
 This vagrant owl is playing here—  
 That is the worst of his employment :  
 He's at the top of his enjoyment !"

This explanation stilled the alarm, 130  
 Cured the foreboder like a charm ;  
 This, and the manner, and the voice,  
 Summoned the Sailor to rejoice ;  
 His heart is up—he fears no evil  
 From life or death, from man or devil ;

He wheels—and, making many stops, 135  
 Brandished his crutch against the moun-  
 tain tops ;  
 And, while he talked of blows and scars,  
 Benjamin, among the stars,  
 Beheld a dancing—and a glancing ; 140  
 Such retreating and advancing  
 As, I ween, was never seen  
 In bloodiest battle since the days of Mars !

#### Canto Fourth.

THUS they, with freaks of proud delight,  
 Beguile the remnant of the night ;  
 And many a snatch of jovial song  
 Regales them as they wind along ;  
 While to the music, from on high, 5  
 The echoes make a glad reply.—  
 But the sage Muse the revel heeds  
 No farther than her story needs ;  
 Nor will she servilely attend  
 The loitering journey to its end. 10  
 —Blithe spirits of her own impel  
 The Muse, who scents the morning air,  
 To take of this transported pair  
 A brief and unproved farewell ;  
 To quit the slow-paced waggon's side, 15  
 And wander down yon hawthorn dell,  
 With murmuring Greta for her guide.  
 —There doth she ken the awful form  
 Of Raven-crag—black as a storm—  
 Glimmering through the twilight pale ; 20  
 And Ghimmer-crag,<sup>1</sup> his tall twin brother,  
 Each peering forth to meet the other :—  
 And, while she roves through St. John's  
 Vale,  
 Along the smooth unpathwayed plain,  
 By sheep-track or through cottage lane, 25  
 Where no disturbance comes to intrude  
 Upon the pensive solitude,  
 Her unsuspecting eye, perchance,  
 With the rude shepherd's favoured glance,  
 Beholds the faeries in array, 30  
 Whose party-coloured garments gay  
 The silent company betray :  
 Red, green, and blue ; a moment's sight !  
 For Skiddaw-top with rosy light  
 Is touched—and all the band take flight.  
 —Fly also, Muse ! and from the dell 35  
 Mount to the ridge of Nathdale Fell ;

<sup>1</sup> The crag of the ewe lamb.

Thence look thou forth o'er wood and  
 lawn  
 Hoar with the frost-like dews of dawn ;  
 Across yon meadowy bottom look, 40  
 Where close fogs hide their parent brook ;  
 And see, beyond that hamlet small  
 The ruined towers of Threlkeld-hall,  
 Lurking in a double shade,  
 By trees and lingering twilight made ! 45  
 There, at Blencathara's rugged feet,  
 Sir Lancelot gave a safe retreat  
 To noble Clifford ; from annoy  
 Concealed the persecuted boy,  
 Well pleased in rustic garb to feed 50  
 His flock, and pipe on shepherd's reed  
 Among this multitude of hills,  
 Crag, woodlands, waterfalls, and rills ;  
 Which soon the morning shall unfold,  
 From east to west, in ample vest 55  
 Of massy gloom and radiance bold.

The mists, that o'er the streamlet's bed  
 Hung low, begin to rise and spread ;  
 Even while I speak, their skirts of grey  
 Are smitten by a silver ray ; 60  
 And, lo !—up Castrigg's naked steep  
 (Where, smoothly urged, the vapours  
 sweep  
 Along—and scatter and divide,  
 Like fleecy clouds self-multiplied)  
 The stately waggon is ascending, 65  
 With faithful Benjamin attending,  
 Apparent now beside his team—  
 Now lost amid a glittering steam :  
 And with him goes his Sailor-friend,  
 By this time near their journey's end ; 70  
 And, after their high-minded riot,  
 Sickening into thoughtful quiet ;  
 As if the morning's pleasant hour  
 Had for their joys a killing power.  
 And sooth for Benjamin a vein 75  
 Is opened of still deeper pain,  
 As if his heart by notes were stung  
 From out the lowly hedge-rows flung ;  
 As if the warbler lost in light  
 Reproved his soarings of the night, 80  
 In strains of rapture pure and holy  
 Upbraided his distempered folly.

    Drooping is he, his step is dull ;  
 But the horses stretch and pull ;

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| With increasing vigour climb,          | 65  |
| Eager to repair lost time ;            |     |
| Whether, by their own desert,          |     |
| Knowing what cause there is for shame, |     |
| They are labouring to avert            |     |
| As much as may be of the blame,        | 90  |
| Which, they foresee, must soon alight  |     |
| Upon <i>his</i> head, whom, in despite |     |
| Of all his failings, they love best ;  |     |
| Whether for him they are distrust ;    |     |
| Or, by length of fasting roused,       | 95  |
| Are impatient to be housed :           |     |
| Up against the hill they strain        |     |
| Tugging at the iron chain,             |     |
| Tugging all with might and main,       |     |
| Last and foremost, every horse         | 100 |
| To the utmost of his force !           |     |
| And the smoke and respiration,         |     |
| Rising like an exhalation,             |     |
| Blend with the mist—a moving shroud    |     |
| To form, an undissolving cloud ;       | 105 |
| Which, with slant ray, the merry sun   |     |
| Takes delight to play upon.            |     |
| Never golden-haired Apollo,            |     |
| Pleased some favourite chief to follow |     |
| Through accidents of peace or war,     | 110 |
| In a perilous moment threw             |     |
| Around the object of his care          |     |
| Veil of such celestial hue ;           |     |
| Interposed so bright a screen—         |     |
| Him and his enemies between !          | 115 |

Alas ! what boots it?—who can hide,  
When the malicious Fates are bent  
On working out an ill intent?  
Can destiny be turned aside?  
No—sad progress of my story ! 120  
Benjamin, this outward glory  
Cannot shield thee from thy Master,  
Who from Keswick has pricked forth,  
Sour and surly as the north ;  
And, in fear of some disaster, 125  
Comes to give what help he may,  
And to hear what thou canst say ;  
If, as needs he must forbode,  
Thou hast been loitering on the road !  
His fears, his doubts, may, now take  
flight— 130  
The wished-for object is in sight ;  
Yet, trust the Muse, it rather hath  
Stirred him up to livelier wrath :

Which he stifles, moody man !  
With all the patience that he can ; 135  
To the end that, at your meeting,  
He may give thee decent greeting.

There he is—resolved to stop,  
Till the waggon gains the top;  
But stop he cannot—must advance: 140  
Him Benjamin, with lucky glance,  
Espies—and instantly is ready,  
Self-collected, poised, and steady:  
And, to be the better seen,  
Issues from his radiant shroud, 145  
From his close-attending cloud,  
With careless air and open mien.  
Erect his port, and firm his going;  
So struts yon cock that now is crowing;  
And the morning light in grace 150  
Strikes upon his lifted face,  
Hurrying the pallid hue away  
That might his trespasses betray.  
But what can all avail to clear him,  
Or what need of explanation, 155  
Parley or interrogation?  
For the Master sees, alas!  
That unhappy Figure near him,  
Limping o'er the dewy grass,  
Where the road it fringes, sweet, 160  
Soft and cool to way-worn feet;  
And, O indignity! an Ass,  
By his noble Mastiffs' side,  
Tethered to the waggon's tail:  
And the ship, in all her pride, 165  
Following after in full sail!  
Not to speak of babe and mother;  
Who, contented with each other,  
And snug as birds in leafy arbour,  
Find, within, a blessed harbour! 170

With eager eyes the Master pries ;  
Looks in and out, and through and  
through ;  
Says nothing—till at last he spies  
A wound upon the Mastiff's head,  
A wound where plainly might be read 175  
What feats an Ass's hoof can do !  
But drop the rest :—this aggravation,  
This complicated provocation,  
A hoard of grievances unsealed ;  
All past forgiveness it repealed ; 180  
And thus, and through distempered blood  
On both sides, Benjamin the good,

The patient, and the tender-hearted,  
 Was from his team and waggon parted;  
 When duty of that day was o'er, 185  
 Laid down his whip—and served no more.—  
 Nor could the waggon long survive,  
 Which Benjamin had ceased to drive:  
 It lingered on;—guide after guide  
 Ambitiously the office tried; 190  
 But each unmanageable hill  
 Called for *his* patience and *his* skill;—  
 And sure it is that through this night,  
 And what the morning brought to light,  
 Two losses had we to sustain, 195  
 We lost both WAGGONER and WAIN!

Accept, O Friend, for praise or blame,  
 The gift of this adventurous song;  
 A record which I dared to frame, 199  
 Though timid scruples checked me long;  
 They checked me—and I left the theme  
 Untouched;—in spite of many a gleam  
 Of fancy which thereon was shed,  
 Like pleasant sunbeams shifting still  
 Upon the side of a distant hill: 205  
 But Nature might not be gainsaid;  
 For what I have and what I miss  
 I sing of these;—it makes my bliss!  
 Nor is it I who play the part,  
 But a shy spirit in my heart, 210  
 That comes and goes—will sometimes leap  
 From hiding-places ten years deep;  
 Or haunts me with familiar face,  
 Returning, like a ghost unladen,  
 Until the debt I owe be paid. 215  
 Forgive me then; for I had been  
 On friendly terms with this Machine:  
 In him, while he was wont to trace  
 Our roads, through many a long year's  
 space,  
 A living almanack had we; 220  
 We had a speaking diary,  
 That in this uneventful place,  
 Gave to the days a mark and name  
 By which we knew them when they came.

—Yes, I, and all about me here, 225  
 Through all the changes of the year,  
 Had seen him through the mountains go,  
 In pomp of mist or pomp of snow,  
 Majestically huge and slow:  
 Or with a milder grace adorning 230  
 The landscape of a summer's morning;  
 While Grasmere smoothed her liquid  
 plain  
 The moving image to detain;  
 And mighty Fairfield, with a chime  
 Of echoes, to his march kept time; 235  
 When little other business stirred,  
 And little other sound was heard;  
 In that delicious hour of balm,  
 Stillness, solitude, and calm,  
 While yet the valley is arrayed, 240  
 On this side with a sober shade;  
 On that is prodigally bright—  
 Crag, lawn, and wood—with rosy light.  
 —But most of all, thou lordly Wain!  
 I wish to have thee here again, 245  
 When windows flap and chimney roars,  
 And all is dismal out of doors;  
 And, sitting by my fire, I see  
 Eight sorry carts, no less a train!  
 Unworthy successors of thee, 250  
 Come straggling through the wind and  
 rain:  
 And oft, as they pass slowly on,  
 Beneath my windows, one by one,  
 See, perched upon the naked height  
 The summit of a cumbrous freight, 255  
 A single traveller—and there  
 Another; then perhaps a pair—  
 The lame, the sickly, and the old;  
 Men, women, heartless with the cold;  
 And babes in wet and starveling plight;  
 Which once, be weather as it might, 261  
 Had still a nest within a nest,  
 Thy shelter—and their mother's breast!  
 Then most of all, then far the most,  
 Do I regret what we have lost; 265  
 Am grieved for that unhappy sin  
 Which robbed us of good Benjamin;—  
 And of his stately Charge, which none  
 Could keep alive when He was gone!

# POEMS OF THE IMAGINATION.

## I.

### THERE WAS A BOY.

[Composed November or December, 1793.  
Published 1800.]

THERE was a Boy; ye knew him well, ye  
cliffs  
And islands of Winander!—many a time,  
At evening, when the earliest stars began  
To move along the edges of the hills,  
Rising or setting, would he stand alone, 5  
Beneath the trees, or by the glimmering  
lake;  
And there, with fingers interwoven, both  
hands  
Pressed closely palm to palm and to his  
mouth  
Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,  
Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls, 10  
That they might answer him.—And they  
would shout  
Across the watery vale, and shout again,  
Responsive to his call,—with quivering  
peals,  
And long halloos, and screams, and echoes  
loud  
Redoubled and redoubled; concourse  
wild 15  
Of jocund din! And, when there came a  
pause  
Of silence such as baffled his best skill:  
Then sometimes, in that silence, while he  
hung  
Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise  
Has carried far into his heart the voice 20  
Of mountain-torrents; or the visible scene  
Would enter unawares into his mind  
With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,  
Its woods, and that uncertain heaven  
received  
Into the bosom of the steady lake. 25

This boy was taken from his mates, and  
died  
In childhood, ere he was full twelve years  
old.  
Pre-eminent in beauty is the vale  
Where he was born and bred: the church-  
yard hangs  
Upon a slope above the village-school; 30  
And through that churchyard when my  
way has led  
On summer-evenings, I believe that there  
A long half-hour together I have stood  
Mute—looking at the grave in which he  
lies!

## II.

### TO THE CUCKOO.

[Composed March 23-26, 1802.—Published 1807.]

O BLITHE New-comer! I have heard,  
I hear thee and rejoice.  
O Cuckoo! shall I call thee Bird,  
Or but a wandering Voice?  
While I am lying on the grass 5  
Thy twofold shout I hear;  
From hill to hill it seems to pass  
At once far off, and near.  
Though babbling only to the Vale,  
Of sunshine and of flowers, 10  
Thou bringest unto me a tale  
Of visionary hours.  
Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring!  
Even yet thou art to me  
No bird, but an invisible thing, 15  
A voice, a mystery;  
The same whom in my schoolboy days  
I listened to; that Cry  
Which made me look a thousand ways  
In bush, and tree, and sky. 20

To seek thee did I often rove  
Through woods and on the green;  
And thou wert still a hope, a love;  
Still longed for, never seen.

And I can listen to thee yet; 25  
Can lie upon the plain  
And listen, till I do beget  
That golden time again.

O blessed Bird! the earth we pace  
Again appears to be 30  
An unsubstantial, faery place;  
That is fit home for Thee!

### III.

#### A NIGHT-PIECE.

[Composed January 25, 1798.—Published 1815.]

—THE sky is overcast  
With a continuous cloud of texture close,  
Heavy and wan, all whitened by the  
Moon,  
Which through that veil is indistinctly  
seen,

A dull, contracted circle, yielding light 5  
So feebly spread that not a shadow falls,  
Chequering the ground—from rock, plant,  
tree, or tower.

At length a pleasant instantaneous gleam  
Startles the pensive traveller while he  
treads

His lonesome path, with unobserving eye  
Bent earthwards; he looks up—the clouds  
are split 11

Asunder,—and above his head he sees  
The clear Moon, and the glory of the  
heavens.

There in a black-blue vault she sails along,  
Followed by multitudes of stars, that, small  
And sharp, and bright, along the dark  
abyss 16

Drive as she drives: how fast they wheel  
away,

Yet vanish not!—the wind is in the tree,  
But they are silent;—still they roll along  
Immeasurably distant; and the vault, 20  
Built round by those white clouds, enormous clouds,

Still deepens its unfathomable depth.  
At length the Vision closes; and the mind,

Not undisturbed by the delight it feels,  
Which slowly settles into peaceful calm,  
Is left to muse upon the solemn scene. 26

### IV.

#### AIREY-FORCE VALLEY.

[Composed? — Published 1842.]

—Not a breath of air  
Ruffles the bosom of this leafy glen.  
From the brook's margin, wide around,  
the trees

Are steadfast as the rocks; the brook itself,  
Old as the hills that feed it from afar, 5  
Doth rather deepen than disturb the calm  
Where all things else are still and motion-  
less.

And yet, even now, a little breeze, per-  
chance

Escaped from boisterous winds that rage  
without,

Has entered, by the sturdy oaks unfelt, 10  
But to its gentle touch how sensitive  
Is the light ash! that, pendent from the  
brow

Of yon dim cave, in seeming silence makes  
A soft eye-music of slow-waving boughs,  
Powerful almost as vocal harmony 15  
To stay the wanderer's steps and soothe  
his thoughts.

### V.

#### YEW-TREES.

[Composed 1803.—Published 1815.]

THERE is a Yew-tree, pride of Lorton Vale,  
Which to this day stands single, in the  
midst

Of its own darkness, as it stood of yore;  
Not loth to furnish weapons for the bands  
Of Umfraville or Percy ere they marched  
To Scotland's heaths; or those that  
crossed the sea 6

And drew their sounding bows at Azin-  
cour,

Perhaps at earlier Crecy, or Poitiers.  
Of vast circumference and gloom profound  
This solitary Tree! a living thing 10  
Produced too slowly ever to decay;  
Of form and aspect too magnificent  
To be destroyed. But worthier still of note

Are those fraternal Four of Borrowdale,  
 Joined in one solemn and capacious grove;  
 Huge trunks! and each particular trunk  
     a growth 15  
 Of intertwined fibres serpentine  
 Up-coiling, and inveterately convolved;  
 Nor uninformed with Phantasy, and looks  
 That threaten the profane; a pillared  
     shade, 20  
 Upon whose grassless floor of red-brown  
     hue,  
 By sheddings from the pining umbrage  
     tinged  
 Perennially—beneath whose sable roof  
 Of boughs, as if for festal purpose decked  
 With unrejoicing berries—ghostly Shapes  
 May meet at noontide; Fear and trem-  
     bling Hope, 25  
 Silence and Foresight; Death the Skeleton  
 And Time the Shadow;—there to celebrate,  
 As in a natural temple scattered o'er  
 With altars undisturbed of mossy stone,  
 United worship; or in mute repose 31  
 To lie, and listen to the mountain flood  
 Murmuring from Glaramara's inmost  
     caves.

## VI.

## NUTTING.

[Composed 1799.—Published 1800.]

—It seems a day  
 (I speak of one from many singled out)  
 One of those heavenly days that cannot die;  
 When, in the eagerness of boyish hope,  
 I left our cottage-threshold, sallying forth  
 With a huge wallet o'er my shoulders slung,  
 A nutting-crook in hand; and turned my  
     steps 7  
 Tow'rd some far-distant wood, a Figure  
     quaint,  
 Tricked out in proud disguise of cast-off  
     weeds  
 Which for that service had been hus-  
     banded, 10  
 By exhortation of my frugal Dame—  
 Motley accoutrement, of power to smile  
 At thorns, and brakes, and brambles,—  
     and in truth  
 More ragged than need was! O'er path-  
     less rocks,

Through beds of matted fern, and tangled  
     thickets, 15  
 Forcing my way, I came to one dear nook  
 Unvisited, where not a broken bough  
 Drooped with its withered leaves, un-  
     gracious sign  
 Of devastation; but the hazels rose  
 Tall and erect, with tempting clusters  
     hung, 20  
 A virgin scene!—A little while I stood,  
 Breathing with such suppression of the  
     heart  
 As joy delights in; and with wise restraint  
 Voluptuous, fearless of a rival, eyed  
 The banquet;—or beneath the trees I sate  
 Among the flowers, and with the flowers  
     I played; 26  
 A temper known to those who, after long  
 And weary expectation, have been blest  
 With sudden happiness beyond all hope.  
 Perhaps it was a bower beneath whose  
     leaves 30  
 The violets of five seasons re-appear  
 And fade, unseen by any human eye;  
 Where fairy water-breaks do murmur on  
 For ever; and I saw the sparkling foam,  
 And—with my cheek on one of those green  
     stones 35  
 That, fleeced with moss, under the shady  
     trees,  
 Lay round me, scattered like a flock of  
     sheep—  
 I heard the murmur and the murmuring  
     sound,  
 In that sweet mood when pleasure loves  
     to pay  
 Tribute to ease; and, of its joy secure, 40  
 The heart luxuriates with indifferent  
     things,  
 Wasting its kindness on stocks and stones,  
 And on the vacant air. Then up I rose,  
 And dragged to earth both branch and  
     bough, with crash 44  
 And merciless ravage: and the shady nook  
 Of hazels, and the green and mossy bower,  
 Deformed and sullied, patiently gave up  
 Their quiet being: and unless I now  
 Confound my present feelings with the  
     past,  
 Ere from the mutilated bower I turned 50  
 Exulting, rich beyond the wealth of kings,

I felt a sense of pain when I beheld  
The silent trees, and saw the intruding  
sky.—  
Then, dearest Maiden, move along these  
shades 54  
In gentleness of heart; with gentle hand  
Touch—for there is a spirit in the woods.

## VII.

## THE SIMPLON PASS.

[Composed 1799 (? 1804).—Published 1845.]

—BROOK and road  
Were fellow-travellers in this gloomy Pass,  
And with them did we journey several  
hours  
At a slow step. The immeasurable height  
Of woods decaying, never to be decayed, 5  
The stationary blasts of waterfalls,  
And in the narrow rent, at every turn,  
Winds thwarting winds bewildered and  
forlorn,  
The torrents shooting from the clear blue  
sky,  
The rocks that muttered close upon our  
ears, 10  
Black drizzling crags that spake by the  
wayside  
As if a voice were in them, the sick sight  
And giddy prospect of the raving stream,  
The unfettered clouds and region of the  
heavens,  
Tumult and peace, the darkness and the  
light— 15  
Were all like workings of one mind, the  
features  
Of the same face, blossoms upon one tree,  
Characters of the great Apocalypse,  
The types and symbols of Eternity,  
Of first, and last, and midst, and without  
end. 20

## VIII.

[Composed 1804.—Published 1807.]

SHE was a Phantom of delight  
When first she gleamed upon my sight;  
A lovely Apparition, sent  
To be a moment's ornament;  
Her eyes as stars of Twilight fair; 5  
Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair;

But all things else about her drawn  
From May-time and the cheerful Dawn;  
A dancing Shape, an Image gay,  
To haunt, to startle, and way-lay. 10

I saw her upon nearer view,  
A Spirit, yet a Woman too!  
Her household motions light and free,  
And steps of virgin-liberty;  
A countenance in which did meet 15  
Sweet records, promises as sweet;  
A Creature not too bright or good  
For human nature's daily food;  
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,  
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and 20  
smiles.

And now I see with eye serene  
The very pulse of the machine;  
A Being breathing thoughtful breath,  
A Traveller between life and death;  
The reason firm, the temperate will, 25  
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;  
A perfect Woman, nobly planned,  
To warn, to comfort, and command;  
And yet a Spirit still, and bright  
With something of angelic light. 30

## IX.

[Composed 1806.—Published 1807.]

O NIGHTINGALE! thou surely art  
A creature of a "fiery heart":—  
These notes of thine—they pierce and  
pierce;  
Tumultuous harmony and fierce!  
Thou sing'st as if the God of wine 5  
Had helped thee to a Valentine;  
A song in mockery and despite  
Of shades, and dews, and silent night;  
And steady bliss, and all the loves  
Now sleeping in these peaceful groves. 10

I heard a Stock-dove sing or say  
His homely tale, this very day;  
His voice was buried among trees,  
Yet to be come-at by the breeze:  
He did not cease; but cooed—and cooed;  
And somewhat pensively he wooed: 16  
He sang of love, with quiet blending,  
Slow to begin, and never ending;  
Of serious faith, and inward glee;  
That was the song—the song for me! 20

## X.

[Composed 1799.—Published 1800.]

THREE years she grew in sun and shower,  
Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower  
On earth was never sown ;  
This Child I to myself will take ;  
She shall be mine, and I will make  
A Lady of my own. 5

"Myself will to my darling be  
Both law and impulse : and with me  
The Girl, in rock and plain,  
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,  
Shall feel an overseeing power 11  
To kindle or restrain.

"She shall be sportive as the fawn  
That wild with glee across the lawn  
Or up the mountain springs ; 15  
And hers shall be the breathing balm,  
And hers the silence and the calm  
Of mute insensate things.

"The floating clouds their state shall  
lend  
To her ; for her the willow bend ; 20  
Nor shall she fail to see  
Even in the motions of the Storm  
Grace that shall mould the Maiden's  
form  
By silent sympathy.

"The stars of midnight shall be dear 25  
To her ; and she shall lean her ear  
In many a secret place  
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,  
And beauty born of murmuring sound  
Shall pass into her face. 30

"And vital feelings of delight  
Shall reach her form to stateliest height,  
Her virgin bosom swell ;  
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give  
While she and I together live 35  
Here in this happy dell."

Thus Nature spake—The work was done—  
How soon my Lucy's race was run !  
She died, and left to me  
This heath, this calm, and quiet scene ; 40  
The memory of what has been,  
And never more will be.

## XI.

[Composed 1799.—Published 1800.]

A SLUMBER did my spirit seal ;  
I had no human fears :  
She seemed a thing that could not feel  
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force ; 5  
She neither hears nor sees ;  
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,  
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

## XII.

[Composed 1804.—Published 1807.]

I WANDERED lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host, of golden daffodils ;  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees, 5  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine  
And twinkle on the milky way,  
They stretched in never-ending line  
Along the margin of a bay : 10  
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,  
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced ; but they  
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee :  
A poet could not but be gay, 15  
In such a jocund company :  
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought  
What wealth the show to me had brought :

For oft, when on my couch I lie  
In vacant or in pensive mood, 20  
They flash upon that inward eye  
Which is the bliss of solitude ;  
And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
And dances with the daffodils.

## XIII.

## THE REVERIE OF POOR SUSAN.

[Composed 1797.—Published 1800.]

At the corner of Wood Street, when day-  
light appears,  
Hangs a Thrush that sings loud, it has  
sung for three years :

Poor Susan has passed by the spot, and  
has heard  
In the silence of morning the song of the  
Bird.

'Tis a note of enchantment; what ails  
her? She sees 5  
A mountain ascending, a vision of trees;  
Bright volumes of vapour through Loth-  
bury glide,  
And a river flows on through the vale of  
Cheapside.

Green pastures she views in the midst of  
the dale,  
Down which she so often has tripped with  
her pail; 10  
And a single small cottage, a nest like a  
dove's,  
The one only dwelling on earth that she  
loves.

She looks, and her heart is in heaven:  
but they fade,  
The mist and the river, the hill and the  
shade:  
The stream will not flow, and the hill will  
not rise, 15  
And the colours have all passed away  
from her eyes!

#### XIV.

##### POWER OF MUSIC.

[Composed 1806.—Published 1807.]

AN Orpheus! an Orpheus! yes, Faith  
may grow bold,  
And take to herself all the wonders of  
old;—  
Near the stately Pantheon you'll meet  
with the same  
In the street that from Oxford hath bor-  
rowed its name.

His station is there; and he works on the  
crowd, 5  
He sways them with harmony merry and  
loud;  
He fills with his power all their hearts to  
the brim—  
Was aught ever heard like his fiddle and  
him?

What an eager assembly! what an empire  
is this!  
The weary have life, and the hungry have  
bliss; 10  
The mourner is cheered, and the anxious  
have rest;  
And the guilt-burthened soul is no longer  
opprest.

As the Moon brightens round her the  
clouds of the night,  
So He, where he stands, is a centre of light;  
It gleams on the face, there, of dusky-  
browed Jack, 15  
And the pale-visaged Baker's, with basket  
on back.

That errand-bound 'Prentice was passing  
in haste—  
What matter! he's caught—and his time  
runs to waste;  
The Newsman is stopped, though he stops  
on the fret;  
And the half-breathless Lamplighter—  
he's in the net! 20

The Porter sits down on the weight which  
he bore;  
The Lass with her barrow wheels hither  
her store;—  
If a thief could be here he might pilfer at  
ease;  
She sees the Musician, 'tis all that she sees!

He stands, backed by the wall;—he abates  
not his din; 25  
His hat gives him vigour, with boons  
dropping in,  
From the old and the young, from the  
poorest; and there!  
The one-pennied Boy has his penny to  
spare.

O blest are the hearers, and proud be the  
hand  
Of the pleasure it spreads through so  
thankful a band; 30  
I am glad for him, blind as he is!—all the  
while  
If they speak 'tis to praise, and they  
praise with a smile.

That tall Man, a giant in bulk and in height,  
Not an inch of his body is free from delight;  
Can he keep himself still, if he would?  
oh, not he! 35  
The music stirs in him like wind through a tree.

Mark that Cripple who leans on his crutch; like a tower  
That long has leaned forward, leans hour after hour!—  
That Mother, whose spirit in fetters is bound,  
While she dandles the Babe in her arms to the sound. 40

Now, coaches and chariots! roar on like a stream;  
Here are twenty souls happy as souls in a dream:  
They are deaf to your murmurs—they care not for you,  
Nor what ye are flying, nor what ye pursue!

## XV.

## STAR-GAZERS.

[Composed 1806.—Published 1807.]

WHAT crowd is this? what have we here!  
we must not pass it by;  
A Telescope upon its frame, and pointed to the sky:  
Long is it as a barber's pole, or mast of little boat,  
Some little pleasure-skiff, that doth on Thames's waters float.  
The Showman chooses well his place, 'tis Leicester's busy Square; 5  
And is as happy in his night, for the heavens are blue and fair;  
Calm, though impatient, is the crowd; each stands ready with the fee,  
And envies him that's looking;—what an insight must it be!  
Yet, Showman, where can lie the cause?  
Shall thy Implement have blame,

A boaster that, when he is tried, fails, and is put to shame? 10  
Or is it good as others are, and be their eyes in fault?  
Their eyes, or minds? or, finally, is yon resplendent vault?

Is nothing of that radiant pomp so good as we have here?  
Or gives a thing but small delight that never can be dear?  
The silver moon with all her vales, and hills of mightiest fame, 15  
Doth she betray us when they're seen? or are they but a name?

Or is it rather that Conceit rapacious is and strong,  
And bounty never yields so much but it seems to do her wrong?  
Or is it that, when human Souls a journey long have had  
And are returned into themselves, they cannot but be sad? 20

Or must we be constrained to think that these Spectators rude,  
Poor in estate, of manners base, men of the multitude,  
Have souls which never yet have risen, and therefore prostrate lie?  
No, no, this cannot be;—men thirst for power and majesty!

Does, then, a deep and earnest thought the blissful mind employ 25  
Of him who gazes, or has gazed? a grave and steady joy,  
That doth reject all show of pride, admits no outward sign,  
Because not of this noisy world, but silent and divine!

Whatever be the cause, 'tis sure that they who pry and pore  
Seem to meet with little gain, seem less happy than before: 30  
One after One they take their turn, nor have I one espied  
That doth not slackly go away, as if dissatisfied.

## XVI.

## WRITTEN IN MARCH,

WHILE RESTING ON THE BRIDGE AT THE  
FOOT OF BROTHER'S WATER.

[Composed April 16, 1802.—Published 1807.]

THE Cock is crowing,  
The stream is flowing,  
The small birds twitter,  
The lake doth glitter,  
The green field sleeps in the sun ; 5  
The oldest and youngest  
Are at work with the strongest ;  
The cattle are grazing,  
Their heads never raising ;  
There are forty feeding like one ! 10  
Like an army defeated  
The snow hath retreated,  
And now doth fare ill  
On the top of the bare hill ;  
The Ploughboy is whooping—anon—anon :  
There's joy in the mountains ; 16  
There's life in the fountains ;  
Small clouds are sailing,  
Blue sky prevailing ;  
The rain is over and gone ! 20

## XVII.

[Composed ?.—Published 1842.]

LYRE ! though such power do in thy magic  
live  
As might from India's farthest plain  
Recall the not unwilling Maid,  
Assist me to detain  
The lovely Fugitive : 5  
Check with thy notes the impulse which,  
betrayed  
By her sweet farewell looks, I longed to  
aid.  
Here let me gaze enrapt upon that eye,  
The impregnable and awe-inspiring fort  
Of contemplation, the calm port 10  
By reason fenced from winds that sigh  
Among the restless sails of vanity.  
But if no wish be hers that we should  
part,  
A humbler bliss would satisfy my heart.  
Where all things are so fair, 15

Enough by her dear side to breathe the  
air

Of this Elysian weather ;  
And on or in, or near, the brook, espy  
Shade upon the sunshine lying  
Faint and somewhat pensively ;  
And downward Image gaily vying 21  
With its upright living tree  
'Mid silver clouds, and openings of blue  
sky  
As soft almost and deep as her cerulean  
eye.

Nor less the joy with many a glance 25  
Cast up the Stream or down at her be-  
seeching,  
To mark its eddying foam-balls prettily  
distrest  
By ever-changing shape and want of rest ;  
Or watch, with mutual teaching,  
The current as it plays 30  
In flashing leaps and stealthy  
creeps  
Adown a rocky maze ;  
Or note (translucent summer's happiest  
chance !)  
In the slope-channel floored with pebbles  
bright,  
Stones of all hues, gem emulous of gem,  
So vivid that they take from keenest  
sight 36  
The liquid veil that seeks not to hide  
them.

## XVIII.

## BEGGARS.

[Composed March 13, 14, 1802.—Published 1807.]

SHE had a tall man's height or more ;  
Her face from summer's noontide heat  
No bonnet shaded, but she wore  
A mantle, to her very feet  
Descending with a graceful flow, 5  
And on her head a cap as white as new-  
fallen snow.  
Her skin was of Egyptian brown :  
Haughty, as if her eye had seen  
Its own light to a distance thrown,  
She towered, fit person for a Queen 10  
To lead those ancient Amazonian files ;  
Or ruling Bandit's wife among the Grecian  
isles.

Advancing, forth she stretched her hand  
 And begged an alms with doleful plea  
 That ceased not; on our English land 15  
 Such woes, I knew, could never be;  
 And yet a boon I gave her, for the  
 creature  
 Was beautiful to see—a weed of glorious  
 feature.

I left her, and pursued my way;  
 And soon before me did espy 20  
 A pair of little Boys at play,  
 Chasing a crimson butterfly;  
 The taller followed with his hat in hand,  
 Wreathed round with yellow flowers the  
 gayest of the land.

The other wore a rimless crown 25  
 With leaves of laurel stuck about;  
 And while both followed up and down,  
 Each whooping with a merry shout,  
 In their fraternal features I could trace  
 Unquestionable lines of that wild Sup-  
 pliant's face. 30

Yet *they*, so blithe of heart, seemed fit  
 For finest tasks of earth or air:  
 Wings let them have, and they might fit  
 Precursors to Aurora's car,  
 Scattering fresh flowers; though happier  
 far, I ween, 35  
 To hunt their fluttering game o'er rock  
 and level green.

They dart across my path—but lo,  
 Each ready with a plaintive whine!  
 Said I, "not half an hour ago  
 Your Mother has had alms of mine." 40  
 "That cannot be," one answered—"she is  
 dead;"—

I looked reproof—they saw—but neither  
 hung his head.

"She has been dead, Sir, many a day."—  
 "Hush, boys! you're telling me a lie;  
 It was your Mother, as I say!" 45  
 And, in the twinkling of an eye,  
 "Come! come!" cried one, and without  
 more ado  
 Off to some other play the joyous Vagrants  
 flew!

## XIX.

## SEQUEL TO THE FOREGOING.

COMPOSED MANY YEARS AFTER.

[Composed 1817.—Published 1827.]

WHERE are they now, those wanton Boys?  
 For whose free range the dædal earth  
 Was filled with animated toys,  
 And implements of frolic mirth;  
 With tools for ready wit to guide; 5  
 And ornaments of seemlier pride,  
 More fresh, more bright, than princes  
 wear;  
 For what one moment flung aside,  
 Another could repair;  
 What good or evil have they seen 10  
 Since I their pastime witnessed here,  
 Their daring wiles, their sportive cheer?  
 I ask—but all is dark between!

They met me in a genial hour,  
 When universal nature breathed 15  
 As with the breath of one sweet flower,—  
 A time to overrule the power  
 Of discontent, and check the birth  
 Of thoughts with better thoughts at strife.  
 The most familiar bane of life 20  
 Since parting Innocence bequeathed  
 Mortality to Earth!  
 Soft clouds, the whitest of the year,  
 Sailed through the sky—the brooks ran  
 clear;  
 The lambs from rock to rock were bound-  
 ing; 25  
 With songs the budded groves resound-  
 ing;  
 And to my heart are still endeared  
 The thoughts with which it then was  
 cheered;  
 The faith which saw that gladsome pair  
 Walk through the fire with unsinged hair.  
 Or, if such faith must needs deceive— 31  
 Then, Spirits of beauty and of grace,  
 Associates in that eager chase;  
 Ye, who within the blameless mind  
 Your favourite seat of empire find— 35  
 Kind Spirits! may we not believe  
 That they, so happy and so fair  
 Through your sweet influence, and the  
 care

Of pitying Heaven, at least were free  
 From touch of *deadly* injury? 40  
 Destined, whate'er their earthly doom,  
 For mercy and immortal bloom?

## XX.

## GIPSIES.

[Composed 1807.—Published 1807.]

YET are they here the same unbroken  
 knot

Of human Beings, in the self-same spot!  
 Men, women, children, yea the frame  
 Of the whole spectacle the same!

Only their fire seems bolder, yielding  
 light, 5

Now deep and red, the colouring of night;  
 That on their Gipsy-faces falls,

Their bed of straw and blanket-walls.  
 —Twelve hours, twelve bounteous hours  
 are gone, while I

Have been a traveller under open sky, 10  
 Much witnessing of change and cheer,  
 Yet as I left I find them here!

The weary Sun betook himself to rest;—  
 Then issued Vesper from the fulgent west,

Outshining like a visible God 15  
 The glorious path in which he trod.

And now, ascending, after one dark hour,  
 And one night's diminution of her power,

Behold the mighty Moon! this way  
 She looks as if at them—but they 20

Regard not her:—oh, better wrong and  
 strife

(By nature transient) than this torpid  
 life;

Life which the very stars reprove  
 As on their silent tasks they move!

Yet, witness all that stirs in heaven or  
 earth! 25

In scorn I speak not;—they are what their  
 birth

And breeding suffer them to be;  
 Wild outcasts of society!

## XXI.

## RUTH.

[Composed 1799.—Published 1800.]

WHEN Ruth was left half desolate,  
 Her Father took another Mate;

And Ruth, not seven years old,  
 A slighted child, at her own will  
 Went wandering over dale and hill, 5  
 In thoughtless freedom, bold.

And she had made a pipe of straw,  
 And music from that pipe could draw  
 Like sounds of winds and floods;  
 Had built a bower upon the green, 10  
 As if she from her birth had been  
 An infant of the woods.

Beneath her father's roof, alone  
 She seemed to live; her thoughts her  
 own;

Herself her own delight; 15  
 Pleased with herself, nor sad, nor gay;  
 And, passing thus the live-long day,  
 She grew to woman's height.

There came a Youth from Georgia's  
 shore—

A military casque he wore, 20  
 With splendid feathers drest;  
 He brought them from the Cherokees;  
 The feathers nodded in the breeze,  
 And made a gallant crest.

From Indian blood you deem him sprung: .  
 But no! he spake the English tongue, 26  
 And bore a soldier's name;  
 And, when America was free  
 From battle and from jeopardy,  
 He 'cross the ocean came. 30

With hues of genius on his cheek  
 In finest tones the Youth could speak:  
 —While he was yet a boy,  
 The moon, the glory of the sun,  
 And streams that murmur as they run, 35  
 Had been his dearest joy.

He was a lovely Youth! I guess  
 The panther in the wilderness  
 Was not so fair as he;  
 And, when he chose to sport and play, 40  
 No dolphin ever was so gay  
 Upon the tropic sea.

Among the Indians he had fought,  
 And with him many tales he brought 45  
 Of pleasure and of fear;  
 Such tales as told to any maid  
 By such a Youth, in the green shade,  
 Were perilous to hear.

He told of girls—a happy rout !  
 Who quit their fold with dance and shout,  
 Their pleasant Indian town, 51  
 To gather strawberries all day long ;  
 Returning with a choral song  
 When daylight is gone down.

He spake of plants that hourly change 55  
 Their blossoms, through a boundless range  
 Of intermingling hues ;  
 With budding, fading, faded flowers  
 They stand the wonder of the bowers  
 From morn to evening dew. 60

He told of the magnolia, spread  
 High as a cloud, high over head !  
 The cypress and her spire ;  
 —Of flowers that with one scarlet gleam  
 Cover a hundred leagues, and seem 65  
 To set the hills on fire.

The Youth of green savannahs spake,  
 And many an endless, endless lake,  
 With all its fairy crowds  
 Of islands, that together lie 70  
 As quietly as spots of sky  
 Among the evening clouds.

“How pleasant,” then he said, “it were  
 A fisher or a hunter there,  
 In sunshine or in shade 75  
 To wander with an easy mind ;  
 And build a household fire, and find  
 A home in every glade !

“What days and what bright years ! Ah  
 me !  
 Our life were life indeed, with thee 80  
 So passed in quiet bliss,  
 And all the while,” said he, “to know  
 That we were in a world of woe,  
 On such an earth as this !”

And then he sometimes interwove 85  
 Fond thoughts about a father's love :  
 “For there,” said he, “are spun  
 Around the heart such tender ties,  
 That our own children to our eyes  
 Are dearer than the sun. 90

“Sweet Ruth ! and could you go with me  
 My helpmate in the woods to hie,  
 Our shed at night to rear ;  
 Or run, my own adopted bride,  
 A sylvan huntress at my side, 95  
 And drive the flying deer !

“Beloved Ruth !”—No more he said.  
 The wakeful Ruth at midnight shed  
 A solitary tear :  
 She thought again—and did agree 100  
 With him to sail across the sea,  
 And drive the flying deer.

“And now, as fitting is and right,  
 We in the church our faith will plight,  
 A husband and a wife.” 105  
 Even so they did ; and I may say  
 That to sweet Ruth that happy day  
 Was more than human life.

Through dream and vision did she sink,  
 Delighted all the while to think 110  
 That on those lonesome floods,  
 And green savannahs, she should share  
 His board with lawful joy, and bear  
 His name in the wild woods.

But, as you have before been told, 115  
 This Stripling, sportive, gay, and bold,  
 And, with his dancing crest,  
 So beautiful, through savage lands  
 Had roamed about, with vagrant bands  
 Of Indians in the West. 120

The wind, the tempest roaring high,  
 The tumult of a tropic sky,  
 Might well be dangerous food  
 For him, a Youth to whom was given  
 So much of earth—so much of heaven, 125  
 And such impetuous blood.

Whatever in those climes he found  
 Irregular in sight or sound  
 Did to his mind impart  
 A kindred impulse, seemed allied 130  
 To his own powers, and justified  
 The workings of his heart.

Nor less, to feed voluptuous thought,  
 The beauteous forms of nature wrought,  
 Fair trees and gorgeous flowers ; 135  
 The breezes their own languor lent ;  
 The stars had feelings, which they sent  
 Into those favoured bowers.

Yet, in his worst pursuits I ween  
 That sometimes there did intervene 140  
 Pure hopes of high intent :  
 For passions linked to forms so fair  
 And stately needs must have their share  
 Of noble sentiment.

- But ill he lived, much evil saw,  
With men to whom no better law  
Nor better life was known;  
Deliberately, and undeceived,  
Those wild men's vices he received,  
And gave them back his own. 145
- His genius and his moral frame  
Were thus impaired, and he became  
The slave of low desires:  
A Man who without self-control  
Would seek what the degraded soul 155  
Unworthily admires.
- And yet he with no feigned delight  
Had wooed the Maiden, day and night  
Had loved her, night and morn:  
What could he less than love a Maid 160  
Whose heart with so much nature played?  
So kind and so forlorn!
- Sometimes, most earnestly, he said,  
"O Ruth! I have been worse than dead;  
False thoughts, thoughts bold and vain,  
Encompassed me on every side 166  
When I, in confidence and pride,  
Had crossed the Atlantic main.
- "Before me shone a glorious world—  
Fresh as a banner bright, unfurled 170  
To music suddenly:  
I looked upon those hills and plains,  
And seemed as if let loose from chains,  
To live at liberty.
- "No more of this; for now, by thee 175  
Dear Ruth! more happily set free  
With nobler zeal I burn;  
My soul from darkness is released,  
Like the whole sky when to the east  
The morning doth return." 180
- Full soon that better mind was gone:  
No hope, no wish remained, not one,—  
They stirred him now no more;  
New objects did new pleasure give,  
And once again he wished to live 185  
As lawless as before.
- Meanwhile, as thus with him it fared,  
They for the voyage were prepared,  
And went to the sea-shore,  
But, when they thither came, the Youth  
Deserted his poor Bride, and Ruth 191  
Could never find him more.
- God help thee, Ruth!—Such pains she had,  
That she in half a year was mad,  
And in a prison housed; 195  
And there, with many a doleful song  
Made of wild words, her cup of wrong  
She fearfully caroused.
- Yet sometimes milder hours she knew,  
Nor wanted sun, nor rain, nor dew, 200  
Nor pastimes of the May;  
—They all were with her in her cell;  
And a clear brook with cheerful knell  
Did o'er the pebbles play.
- When Ruth three seasons thus had lain,  
There came a respite to her pain; 206  
She from her prison fled;  
But of the Vagrant none took thought;  
And where it liked her best she sought  
Her shelter and her bread. 210
- Among the fields she breathed again:  
The master-current of her brain  
Ran permanent and free;  
And, coming to the Banks of Tone,  
There did she rest; and dwell alone 215  
Under the greenwood tree.
- The engines of her pain, the tools  
That shaped her sorrow, rocks and pools,  
And airs that gently stir  
The vernal leaves—she loved them still;  
Nor ever taxed them with the ill 221  
Which had been done to her.
- A Barn her *winter* bed supplies;  
But, till the warmth of summer skies  
And summer days is gone, 225  
(And all do in this tale agree)  
She sleeps beneath the greenwood tree,  
And other home hath none.
- An innocent life, yet far astray!  
And Ruth will, long before her day, 230  
Be broken down and old:  
Sore aches she needs must have! but less  
Of mind than body's wretchedness,  
From damp, and rain, and cold.
- If she is prest by want of food, 235  
She from her dwelling in the wood  
Repairs to a road-side;  
And there she begs at one steep place  
Where up and down with easy pace  
The horsemen-travellers ride. 240

That oaten pipe of hers is mute,  
Or thrown away; but with a flute  
Her loneliness she cheers:  
This flute, made of a hemlock stalk,  
At evening in his homeward walk 245  
The Quantock woodman hears.

I, too, have passed her on the hills  
Setting her little water-mills  
By spouts and fountains wild—  
Such small machinery as she turned 250  
Ere she had wept, ere she had mourned,  
A young and happy Child!

Farewell! and when thy days are told,  
Ill-fated Ruth, in hallowed mould  
Thy corpse shall buried be, 255  
For thee a funeral bell shall ring,  
And all the congregation sing  
A Christian psalm for thee.

## XXII.

## RESOLUTION AND INDEPENDENCE.

Composed May 3-July 4, 1802.—Published 1807.

## I.

THERE was a roaring in the wind all  
night;  
The rain came heavily and fell in floods;  
But now the sun is rising calm and bright;  
The birds are singing in the distant woods;  
Over his own sweet voice the Stock-dove  
broods; 5  
The Jay makes answer as the Magpie  
chatters;  
And all the air is filled with pleasant  
noise of waters.

## II.

All things that love the sun are out of  
doors;  
The sky rejoices in the morning's birth;  
The grass is bright with rain-drops;—on  
the moors 10  
The hare is running races in her mirth;  
And with her feet she from the plashy  
earth  
Raises a mist; that, glittering in the sun,  
Runs with her all the way, wherever she  
doth run.

## III.

I was a Traveller then upon the moor; 15  
I saw the hare that raced about with joy;  
I heard the woods and distant waters roar;  
Or heard them not, as happy as a boy:  
The pleasant season did my heart employ:  
My old remembrances went from me  
wholly; 20  
And all the ways of men, so vain and  
melancholy.

## IV.

But, as it sometimes chanceth, from the  
might  
Of joy in minds that can no further go,  
As high as we have mounted in delight  
In our dejection do we sink as low; 25  
To me that morning did it happen so;  
And fears and fancies thick upon me came;  
Dim sadness—and blind thoughts, I knew  
not, nor could name.

## V.

I heard the sky-lark warbling in the sky;  
And I bethought me of the playful  
hare: 30  
Even such a happy Child of earth am I;  
Even as these blissful creatures do I fare;  
Far from the world I walk, and from all  
care;  
But there may come another day to me—  
Solitude, pain of heart, distress, and po-  
verty. 35

## VI.

My whole life I have lived in pleasant  
thought,  
As if life's business were a summer mood;  
As if all needful things would come un-  
sought  
To genial faith, still rich in genial good;  
But how can He expect that others should  
Build for him, sow for him, and at his  
call 41  
Love him, who for himself will take no  
heed at all?

## VII.

I thought of Chatterton, the marvellous  
Boy,  
The sleepless Soul that perished in his  
pride;

Of Him who walked in glory and in joy 45  
Following his plough, along the moun-  
tain-side:

By our own spirits are we deified:  
We Poets in our youth begin in gladness;  
But thereof come in the end despondency  
and madness.

## VIII.

Now, whether it were by peculiar grace, 50  
A leading from above, a something given,  
Yet it befell that, in this lonely place,  
When I with these untoward thoughts  
had striven,

Beside a pool bare to the eye of heaven  
I saw a Man before me unawares: 55  
The oldest man he seemed that ever wore  
grey hairs.

## IX.

As a huge stone is sometimes seen to lie  
Couched on the bald top of an eminence;  
Wonder to all who do the same espy,  
By what means it could thither come,  
and whence; 60  
So that it seems a thing endued with  
sense:

Like a sea-beast crawled forth, that on a  
shelf  
Of rock or sand reposes, there to sun  
itself;

## X.

Such seemed this Man, not all alive nor  
dead,  
Nor all asleep—in his extreme old age: 65  
His body was bent double, feet and head  
Coming together in life's pilgrimage;  
As if some dire constraint of pain, or rage  
Of sickness felt by him in times long past,  
A more than human weight upon his  
frame had cast. 70

## XI.

Himself he propped, limbs, body, and  
pale face,  
Upon a long grey staff of shaven wood:  
And, still as I drew near with gentle pace,  
Upon the margin of that moorish flood  
Motionless as a cloud the old Man stood,

That heareth not the loud winds when  
they call; 76  
And moveth all together, if it move at all.

## XII.

At length, himself unsettling, he the pond  
Stirred with his staff, and fixedly did look  
Upon the muddy water, which he coned,  
As if he had been reading in a book: 81  
And now a stranger's privilege I took;  
And, drawing to his side, to him did say,  
"This morning gives us promise of a  
glorious day."

## XIII.

A gentle answer did the old Man make,  
In courteous speech which forth he slowly  
drew: 86  
And him with further words I thus be-  
spoke,  
"What occupation do you there pursue?  
This is a lonesome place for one like you."  
Ere he replied, a flash of mild surprise 90  
Broke from the sable orbs of his yet-vivid  
eyes.

## XIV.

His words came feebly, from a feeble  
chest,  
But each in solemn order followed each,  
With something of a lofty utterance  
drest—  
Choice word and measured phrase, above  
the reach 95  
Of ordinary men; a stately speech;  
Such as grave Livers do in Scotland use,  
Religious men, who give to God and man  
their dues.

## XV.

He told, that to these waters he had come  
To gather leeches, being old and poor: 100  
Employment hazardous and wearisome!  
And he had many hardships to endure:  
From pond to pond he roamed, from moor  
to moor;  
Housing, with God's good help, by choice  
or chance;  
And in this way he gained an honest  
maintenance. 105

## XVI.

The old Man still stood talking by my side;  
 But now his voice to me was like a stream  
 Scarce heard; nor word from word could I divide;  
 And the whole body of the Man did seem  
 Like one whom I had met with in a dream; 110  
 Or like a man from some far region sent,  
 To give me human strength, by apt admonishment.

## XVII.

My former thoughts returned: the fear that kills;  
 And hope that is unwilling to be fed;  
 Cold, pain, and labour, and all fleshly ills; 115  
 And mighty Poets in their misery dead.  
 —Perplexed, and longing to be comforted,  
 My question eagerly did I renew,  
 "How is it that you live, and what is it you do?"

## XVIII.

He with a smile did then his words repeat;  
 And said that, gathering leeches, far and wide 121  
 He travelled; stirring thus about his feet  
 The waters of the pools where they abide.  
 "Once I could meet with them on every side;  
 But they have dwindled long by slow decay; 125  
 Yet still I persevere, and find them where I may."

## XIX.

While he was talking thus, the lonely place,  
 The old Man's shape, and speech—all troubled me:  
 In my mind's eye I seemed to see him pace  
 About the weary moors continually, 130  
 Wandering about alone and silently.  
 While I these thoughts within myself pursued,  
 He, having made a pause, the same discourse renewed.

## XX.

And soon with this he other matter blended,  
 Cheerfully uttered, with demeanour kind,  
 But stately in the main; and, when he ended, 136  
 I could have laughed myself to scorn to find  
 In that decrepit Man so firm a mind.  
 "God," said I, "be my help and stay secure;  
 I'll think of the Leech-gatherer on the lonely moor!" 140

## XXIII.

## THE THORN.

Composed 1798.—Published 1798.

## I.

"THERE is a Thorn—it looks so old,  
 In truth, you'd find it hard to say  
 How it could ever have been young,  
 It looks so old and grey.  
 Not higher than a two years' child 5  
 It stands erect, this aged Thorn;  
 No leaves it has, no prickly points;  
 It is a mass of knotted joints,  
 A wretched thing forlorn.  
 It stands erect, and like a stone 10  
 With lichens is it overgrown.

## II.

"Like rock or stone, it is o'ergrown,  
 With lichens to the very top,  
 And hung with heavy tufts of moss,  
 A melancholy crop: 15  
 Up from the earth these mosses creep,  
 And this poor Thorn they clasp it round  
 So close, you'd say that they are bent  
 With plain and manifest intent  
 To drag it to the ground; 20  
 And all have joined in one endeavour  
 To bury this poor Thorn for ever.

## III.

"High on a mountain's highest ridge,  
 Where oft the stormy winter gale  
 Cuts like a scythe, while through the clouds 25  
 It sweeps from vale to vale;

Not five yards from the mountain path,  
 This Thorn you on your left espy ;  
 And to the left, three yards beyond,  
 You see a little muddy pond 30  
 Of water—never dry,  
 Though but of compass small, and  
     bare  
 To thirsty suns and parching air.

## IV.

"And, close beside this aged Thorn,  
 There is a fresh and lovely sight, 35  
 A beauteous heap, a hill of moss,  
 Just half a foot in height.  
 All lovely colours there you see,  
 All colours that were ever seen ;  
 And mossy network too is there, 40  
 As if by hand of lady fair  
 The work had woven been ;  
 And cups, the darlings of the eye,  
 So deep is their vermilion dye.

## V.

"Ah me ! what lovely tints are there 45  
 Of olive green and scarlet bright,  
 In spikes, in branches, and in stars,  
 Green, red, and pearly white !  
 This heap of earth o'ergrown with 50  
     moss,  
 Which close beside the Thorn you  
     see,  
 So fresh in all its beauteous dyes,  
 Is like an infant's grave in size,  
 As like as like can be :  
 But never, never any where,  
 An infant's grave was half so fair. 55

## VI.

"Now would you see this aged Thorn,  
 This pond, and beauteous hill of moss,  
 You must take care and choose your  
     time  
 The mountain when to cross.  
 For oft there sits between the heap, 60  
 So like an infant's grave in size,  
 And that same pond of which I spoke,  
 A Woman in a scarlet cloak,  
 And to herself she cries,  
 'Oh misery ! oh misery !' 65  
 Oh woe is me ! oh misery !'

## VII.

"At all times of the day and night  
 This wretched Woman thither goes ;  
 And she is known to every star,  
 And every wind that blows ; 70  
 And there, beside the Thorn, she sits  
 When the blue daylight's in the skies,  
 And when the whirlwind's on the hill,  
 Or frosty air is keen and still,  
 And to herself she cries, 75  
 'Oh misery ! oh misery !  
 Oh woe is me ! oh misery !'"

## VIII.

"Now wherefore, thus, by day and night,  
 In rain, in tempest, and in snow,  
 Thus to the dreary mountain-top 80  
 Does this poor Woman go ?  
 And why sits she beside the Thorn  
 When the blue daylight's in the sky  
 Or when the whirlwind's on the hill,  
 Or frosty air is keen and still, 85  
 And wherefore does she cry ?—  
 O wherefore ? wherefore ? tell me why  
 Does she repeat that doleful cry ?"

## IX.

"I cannot tell ; I wish I could ;  
 For the true reason no one knows : 90  
 But would you gladly view the spot,  
 The spot to which she goes ;  
 The hillock like an infant's grave,  
 The pond—and Thorn, so old and grey ;  
 Pass by her door—'tis seldom shut— 95  
 And if you see her in her hut—  
 Then to the spot away !  
 I never heard of such as dare  
 Approach the spot when she is there."

## X.

"But wherefore to the mountain-top 100  
 Can this unhappy Woman go,  
 Whatever star is in the skies,  
 Whatever wind may blow ?"  
 "Full twenty years are past and gone  
 Since she (her name is Martha Ray) 105  
 Gave with a maiden's true good-will  
 Her company to Stephen Hill ;  
 And she was blithe and gay,  
 While friends and kindred all approved  
 Of him whom tenderly she loved. 110

## XI.

"And they had fixed the wedding day,  
The morning that must wed them both;  
But Stephen to another Maid  
Had sworn another oath;  
And, with this other Maid, to church 115  
Unthinking Stephen went—  
Poor Martha! on that woeful day  
A pang of pitiless dismay  
Into her soul was sent;  
A fire was kindled in her breast, 120  
Which might not burn itself to rest.

## XII.

"They say, full six months after this,  
While yet the summer leaves were green,  
She to the mountain-top would go,  
And there was often seen. 125  
What could she seek?—or wish to hide?  
Her state to any eye was plain;  
She was with child, and she was mad;  
Yet often was she sober sad  
From her exceeding pain. 130  
O guilty Father—would that death  
Had saved him from that breach of faith!

## XIII.

"Sad case for such a brain to hold  
Communion with a stirring child!  
Sad case, as you may think, for one 135  
Who had a brain so wild!  
Last Christmas-eve we talked of this,  
And grey-haired Wilfred of the glen  
Held that the unborn infant wrought  
About its mother's heart, and brought 140  
Her senses back again:  
And, when at last her time drew near,  
Her looks were calm, her senses clear.

## XIV.

"More know I not, I wish I did,  
And it should all be told to you; 145  
For what became of this poor child  
No mortal ever knew;  
Nay—if a child to her was born  
No earthly tongue could ever tell;  
And if 'twas born alive or dead, 150  
Far less could this with proof be said;  
But some remember well  
That Martha Ray about this time  
Would up the mountain often climb.

## XV.

"And all that winter, when at night 155  
The wind blew from the mountain-peak,  
'Twas worth your while, though in the  
dark,  
The churchyard path to seek:  
For many a time and oft were heard  
Cries coming from the mountain head: 160  
Some plainly living voices were;  
And others, I've heard many swear,  
Were voices of the dead:  
I cannot think, whate'er they say,  
They had to do with Martha Ray. 165

## XVI.

"But that she goes to this old Thorn,  
The Thorn which I described to you,  
And there sits in a scarlet cloak,  
I will be sworn is true.  
For one day with my telescope, 170  
To view the ocean wide and bright,  
When to this country first I came,  
Ere I had heard of Martha's name,  
I climbed the mountain's height:—  
A storm came on, and I could see 175  
No object higher than my knee.

## XVII.

"'Twas mist and rain, and storm and  
rain:  
No screen, no fence could I discover;  
And then the wind! in sooth, it was  
A wind full ten times over. 180  
I looked around, I thought I saw  
A jutting crag,—and off I ran,  
Head-foremost, through the driving rain,  
The shelter of the crag to gain;  
And, as I am a man, 185  
Instead of jutting crag I found  
A Woman seated on the ground.

## XVIII.

"I did not speak—I saw her face;  
Her face!—it was enough for me;  
I turned about and heard her cry, 190  
'Oh misery! oh misery!  
And there she sits, until the moon  
Through half the clear blue sky will go;  
And when the little breezes make  
The waters of the pond to shake, 195  
As all the country know,

She shudders, and you hear her cry,  
'Oh misery ! oh misery !'

## XIX.

"But what's the Thorn? and what the pond?

And what the hill of moss to her? 200  
And what the creeping breeze that comes  
The little pond to stir?"

"I cannot tell; but some will say  
She hanged her baby on the tree;  
Some say she drowned it in the pond, 205  
Which is a little step beyond:  
But all and each agree,  
The little Babe was buried there,  
Beneath that hill of moss so fair.

## XX.

"I've heard, the moss is spotted red 210  
With drops of that poor infant's blood;  
But kill a new-born infant thus,  
I do not think she could!  
Some say if to the pond you go,  
And fix on it a steady view, 215  
The shadow of a babe you trace,  
A baby and a baby's face,  
And that it looks at you;  
Whene'er you look on it, 'tis plain  
The baby looks at you again. 220

## XXI.

"And some had sworn an oath that she  
Should be to public justice brought;  
And for the little infant's bones  
With spades they would have sought.  
But instantly the hill of moss 225  
Before their eyes began to stir!  
And, for full fifty yards around,  
The grass—it shook upon the ground!  
Yet all do still aver  
The little Babe lies buried there, 230  
Beneath that hill of moss so fair.

## XXII.

"I cannot tell how this may be,  
But plain it is the Thorn is bound  
With heavy tufts of moss that strive  
To drag it to the ground; 235  
And this I know, full many a time,  
When she was on the mountain high,

By day, and in the silent night,  
When all the stars shone clear and bright,  
That I have heard her cry, 240  
'Oh misery ! oh misery !  
Oh woe is me ! oh misery !'

## XXIV.

## HART-LEAP WELL.

[Composed January or February, 1800.—Published 1800.]

Hart-Leap Well is a small spring of water, about five miles from Richmond in Yorkshire, and near the side of the road that leads from Richmond to Askrigg. Its name is derived from a remarkable Chase, the memory of which is preserved by the monuments spoken of in the second Part of the following Poem, which monuments do now exist as I have there described them.

THE Knight had ridden down from Wensley Moor

With the slow motion of a summer's cloud,

And now, as he approached a vassal's door,

"Bring forth another horse!" he cried aloud.

"Another horse!"—That shout the vassal heard 5

And saddled his best Steed, a comely grey;

Sir Walter mounted him; he was the third  
Which he had mounted on that glorious day.

Joy sparkled in the prancing courser's eyes;

The horse and horseman are a happy pair; 10

But, though Sir Walter like a falcon flies,  
There is a doleful silence in the air.

A rout this morning left Sir Walter's Hall,  
That as they galloped made the echoes roar;

But horse and man are vanished, one and all; 15

Such race, I think, was never seen before.

Sir Walter, restless as a veering wind,  
Calls to the few tired dogs that yet remain:

Blanch, Swift, and Music, noblest of their  
 kind,  
 Follow, and up the weary mountain  
 strain. 20

The Knight hallooed, he cheered and chid  
 them on

With suppliant gestures and upbraidings  
 stern;

But breath and eyesight fail; and, one  
 by one,

The dogs are stretched among the moun-  
 tain fern.

Where is the throng, the tumult of the  
 race? 25

The bugles that so joyfully were blown?  
 —This chase it looks not like an earthly  
 chase;

Sir Walter and the Hart are left alone.

The poor Hart toils along the mountain-  
 side;

I will not stop to tell how far he fled, 30  
 Nor will I mention by what death he died;  
 But now the Knight beholds him lying  
 dead.

Dismounting, then, he leaned against a  
 thorn;

He had no follower, dog, nor man, nor  
 boy:

He neither cracked his whip, nor blew his  
 horn, 35

But gazed upon the spoil with silent joy.

Close to the thorn on which Sir Walter  
 leaned

Stood his dumb partner in this glorious  
 feat;

Weak as a lamb the hour that it is yeaned;  
 And white with foam as if with cleaving  
 sleet. 40

Upon his side the Hart was lying  
 stretched:

His nostril touched a spring beneath a  
 hill,

And with the last deep groan his breath  
 had fetched

The waters of the spring were trembling  
 still.

And now, too happy for repose or rest, 45  
 (Never had living man such joyful lot!)

Sir Walter walked all round, north, south,  
 and west,

And gazed and gazed upon that darling  
 spot.

And climbing up the hill—(it was at least  
 Four roods of sheer ascent) Sir Walter  
 found 50

Three several hoof-marks which the hunt-  
 ed Beast

Had left imprinted on the grassy ground.

Sir Walter wiped his face, and cried,  
 "Till now

Such sight was never seen by human eyes:  
 Three leaps have borne him from this  
 lofty brow 55

Down to the very fountain where he lies.

"I'll build a pleasure-house upon this  
 spot,

And a small arbour, made for rural joy;

'Twill be the traveller's shed, the pilgrim's  
 cot,

A place of love for damsels that are coy. 60

"A cunning artist will I have to frame

A basin for that fountain in the dell!

And they who do make mention of the  
 same,

From this day forth, shall call it HART-  
 LEAP WELL.

"And, gallant Stag! to make thy praises  
 known, 65

Another monument shall here be raised;

Three several pillars, each a rough-hewn  
 stone,

And planted where thy hoofs the turf  
 have grazed.

"And in the summer-time, when days are  
 long,

I will come hither with my Paramour; 70

And with the dancers and the minstrel's  
 song

We will make merry in that pleasant  
 bower.

"Till the foundations of the mountains  
 fail

My mansion with its arbour shall endure;—

The joy of them who till the fields of  
Swale, 75  
And them who dwell among the woods  
of Ure!"

Then home he went, and left the Hart  
stone-dead,

With breathless nostrils stretched above  
the spring.

—Soon did the Knight perform what he  
had said;

And far and wide the fame thereof did  
ring. 80

Ere thrice the Moon into her port had  
steered,

A cup of stone received the living well;  
Three pillars of rude stone Sir Walter  
reared,

And built a house of pleasure in the dell.

And, near the fountain, flowers of stature  
tall 85

With trailing plants and trees were inter-  
twined,—

Which soon composed a little sylvan hall,  
A leafy shelter from the sun and wind.

And thither, when the summer days were  
long, 89

Sir Walter led his wondering Paramour;  
And with the dancers and the minstrel's  
song

Made merriment within that pleasant  
bower.

The Knight, Sir Walter, died in course of  
time,

And his bones lie in his paternal vale.—  
But there is matter for a second rhyme, 95  
And I to this would add another tale.

#### PART SECOND.

The moving accident is not my trade;  
To freeze the blood I have no ready arts:  
'Tis my delight, alone in summer shade, 99  
To pipe a simple song for thinking hearts.

As I from Hawes to Richmond did repair,  
It chanced that I saw standing in a dell  
Three aspens at three corners of a square;  
And one, not four yards distant, near a  
well.

What this imported I could ill divine: 105  
And, pulling now the rein my horse to  
stop,

I saw three pillars standing in a line,—  
The last stone-pillar on a dark hill-top.

The trees were grey, with neither arms  
nor head;

Half wasted the square mound of tawny  
green; 110

So that you just might say, as then I said,  
"Here in old time the hand of man hath  
been."

I looked upon the hill both far and near,  
More doleful place did never eye survey;  
It seemed as if the spring-time came not  
here, 115  
And Nature here were willing to decay.

I stood in various thoughts and fancies lost,  
When one, who was in shepherd's garb  
attired,

Came up the hollow:—him did I accost,  
And what this place might be I then en-  
quired. 120

The Shepherd stopped, and, that same  
story told

Which in my former rhyme I have re-  
hearsed.

"A jolly place," said he, "in times of old!  
But something ails it now: the spot is  
curst.

"You see these lifeless stumps of aspen  
wood— 125

Some say that they are beeches, others  
elms—

These were the bower; and here a man-  
sion stood,

The finest palace of a hundred realms!

"The arbour does its own condition tell;  
You see the stones, the fountain, and the  
stream; 130

But as to the great Lodge! you might as  
well

Hunt half a day for a forgotten dream.

"There's neither dog nor heifer, horse nor  
sheep;

Will wet his lips within that cup of stone;  
And oftentimes, when all are fast asleep,  
This water doth send forth a dolorous  
groan. 136

"Some say that here a murder has been  
done,  
And blood cries out for blood: but, for  
my part,  
I've guessed, when I've been sitting in  
the sun,

That it was all for that unhappy Hart.

"What thoughts must through the crea-  
ture's brain have past! 141  
Even from the topmost stone, upon the  
steep,  
Are but three bounds—and look, Sir, at  
this last—

O Master! it has been a cruel leap.

"For thirteen hours he ran a desperate  
race; 145  
And in my simple mind we cannot tell  
What cause the Hart might have to love  
this place,  
And come and make his death-bed near  
the well.

"Here on the grass perhaps asleep he  
sank,  
Lulled by the fountain in the summer-  
tide; 150  
This water was perhaps the first he drank  
When he had wandered from his mother's  
side.

"In April here beneath the flowering  
thorn  
He heard the birds their morning carols  
sing;  
And he perhaps, for aught we know, was  
born 155  
Not half a furlong from that self-same  
spring.

"Now, here is neither grass nor pleasant  
shade;  
The sun on drearier hollow never shone;  
So will it be, as I have often said,  
Till trees, and stones, and fountain, all  
are gone." 160

"Grey-headed Shepherd, thou hast spoken  
well;  
Small difference lies between thy creed  
and mine:  
This Beast not unobserved by Nature fell;  
His death was mourned by sympathy di-  
vine.

"The Being that is in the clouds and air,  
That is in the green leaves among the  
groves, 166  
Maintains a deep and reverential care  
For the unoffending creatures whom he  
loves.

"The pleasure-house is dust:—behind,  
before,  
This is no common waste, no common  
gloom; 170  
But Nature, in due course of time, once  
more  
Shall here put on her beauty and her  
bloom.

"She leaves these objects to a slow decay,  
That what we are, and have been, may  
be known;  
But at the coming of the milder day 175  
These monuments shall all be overgrown.

"One lesson, Shepherd, let us two divide,  
Taught both by what she shows, and what  
conceals;  
Never to blend our pleasure or our pride  
With sorrow of the meanest thing that  
feels." 180

## XXV.

SONG AT THE FEAST OF BROUGHAM  
CASTLE,

UPON THE RESTORATION OF LORD CLIFFORD,  
THE SHEPHERD, TO THE ESTATES AND  
HONOURS OF HIS ANCESTORS.

Composed 1807.—Published 1807.

HIGH in the breathless Hall the Minstrel  
sate,  
And Emont's murmur mingled with the  
Song.—  
The words of ancient time I thus translate,  
A festal strain that hath been silent long:—

"From town to town, from tower to  
tower,  
The red rose is a gladsome flower. 6  
Her thirty years of winter past,  
The red rose is revived at last;  
She lifts her head for endless spring,  
For everlasting blossoming: 10

Both roses flourish, red and white:  
 In love and sisterly delight  
 The two that were at strife are blended,  
 And all old troubles now are ended.—  
 Joy! joy to both! but most to her 15  
 Who is the flower of Lancaster!  
 Behold her how She smiles to-day  
 On this great throng, this bright array!  
 Fair greeting doth she send to all  
 From every corner of the hall; 20  
 But chiefly from above the board  
 Where sits in state our rightful Lord,  
 A Clifford to his own restored!

“They came with banner, spear, and  
 shield;  
 And it was proved in Bosworth-field. 25  
 Not long the Avenger was withstood—  
 Earth helped him with the cry of blood:  
 St. George was for us, and the might  
 Of blessed Angels crowned the right.  
 Loud voice the Land has uttered forth, 30  
 We loudest in the faithful north:  
 Our fields rejoice, our mountains ring,  
 Our streams proclaim a welcoming;  
 Our strong-abodes and castles see  
 The glory of their loyalty. 35

“How glad is Skipton at this hour—  
 Though lonely, a deserted Tower;  
 Knight, squire, and yeoman, page and  
 groom:

We have them at the feast of Brough'm.  
 How glad Pendragon—though the sleep  
 Of years be on her!—She shall reap 41  
 A taste of this great pleasure, viewing  
 As in a dream her own renewing.  
 Rejoiced is Brough, right glad, I deem,  
 Beside her little humble stream; 45  
 And she that keepeth watch and ward  
 Her staelier Eden's course to guard;  
 They both are happy at this hour,  
 Though each is but a lonely Tower:—  
 But here is perfect joy and pride 50  
 For one fair House by Emont's side,  
 This day, distinguished without peer,  
 To see her Master and to cheer—  
 Him, and his Lady-mother dear!

“Oh! it was a time forlorn 55  
 When the fatherless was born—  
 Give her wings that she may fly,

Or she sees her infant die!  
 Swords that are with slaughter wild  
 Hunt the Mother and the Child. 60  
 Who will take them from the light?  
 —Yonder is a man in sight—  
 Yonder is a house—but where?  
 No, they must not enter there.  
 To the caves, and to the brooks, 65  
 To the clouds of heaven she looks;  
 She is speechless, but her eyes  
 Pray in ghostly agonies.  
 Blissful Mary, Mother mild,  
 Maid and Mother undefiled, 70  
 Save a Mother and her Child!

“Now Who is he that bounds with joy  
 On Carrock's side, a Shepherd-boy?  
 No thoughts hath he but thoughts that  
 pass  
 Light as the wind along the grass. 75  
 Can this be He who hither came  
 In secret, like a smothered flame?  
 O'er whom such thankful tears were shed  
 For shelter, and a poor man's bread! 79  
 God loves the Child; and God hath willed  
 That those dear words should be fulfilled,  
 The Lady's words, when forced away  
 The last she to her Babe did say:  
 'My own, my own, thy Fellow-guest  
 I may not be; but rest thee, rest, 85  
 For lowly shepherd's life is best!'

“Alas! when evil men are strong  
 No life is good, no pleasure long.  
 The Boy must part from Mosedale's groves,  
 And leave Blencathara's rugged coves, 90  
 And quit the flowers that summer brings  
 To Glenderamakin's lofty springs;  
 Must vanish, and his careless cheer  
 Be turned to heaviness and fear.  
 —Give Sir Lancelot Threlkeld praise! 95  
 Hear it, good man, old in days!  
 Thou tree of covert and of rest  
 For this young Bird that is distrust;  
 Among thy branches safe he lay,  
 And he was free to sport and play, 100  
 When falcons were abroad for prey.

“A recreant harp, that sings of fear  
 And heaviness in Clifford's ear!  
 I said, when evil men are strong,  
 No life is good, no pleasure long, 105

A weak and cowardly untruth !  
 Our Clifford was a happy Youth,  
 And thankful through a weary time,  
 That brought him up to manhood's prime.  
 —Again he wanders forth at will, 110  
 And tends a flock from hill to hill:  
 His garb is humble; ne'er was seen  
 Such garb with such a noble mien;  
 Among the shepherd-grooms no mate  
 Hath he, a Child of strength and state!  
 Yet lacks not friends for simple glee, 116  
 Nor yet for higher sympathy.  
 To his side the fallow-deer  
 Came, and rested without fear;  
 The eagle, lord of land and sea, 120  
 Stooped down to pay him fealty;  
 And both the undying fish that swim  
 Through Bowscale-tarn did wait on him;  
 The pair were servants of his eye  
 In their immortality; 125  
 And glancing, gleaming, dark or bright,  
 Moved to and fro, for his delight.  
 He knew the rocks which Angels haunt  
 Upon the mountains visitant;  
 He hath kenned them taking wing: 130  
 And into caves where Faeries sing  
 He hath entered; and been told  
 By Voices how men lived of old.  
 Among the heavens his eye can see  
 The face of thing that is to be; 135  
 And, if that men report him right,  
 His tongue could whisper words of might.  
 —Now another day is come,  
 Fitter hope, and nobler doom;  
 He hath thrown aside his crook, 140  
 And hath buried deep his book;  
 Armour rusting in his halls  
 On the blood of Clifford calls;—  
 'Quell the Scot,' exclaims the Lance—  
 Bear me to the heart of France, 145  
 Is the longing of the Shield—  
 Tell thy name, thou trembling Field;  
 Field of death, where'er thou be,  
 Groan thou with our victory!  
 Happy day, and mighty hour, 150  
 When our Shepherd in his power,  
 Mailed and horsed, with lance and sword,  
 To his ancestors restored  
 Like a re-appearing Star,  
 Like a glory from afar, 155  
 First shall head the flock of war!"

Alas! the impassioned minstrel did not  
 know  
 How, by Heaven's grace, this Clifford's  
 heart was framed:  
 How he, long forced in humble walks to go,  
 Was softened into feeling, soothed, and  
 tamed. 160

Love had he found in huts where poor men  
 lie;  
 His daily teachers had been woods and  
 rills,  
 The silence that is in the starry sky,  
 The sleep that is among the lonely hills.

In him the savage virtue of the Race, 165  
 Revenge, and all ferocious thoughts were  
 dead:  
 Nor did he change; but kept in lofty place  
 The wisdom which adversity had bred.

Glad were the vales, and every cottage-  
 hearth;  
 The Shepherd-lord was honoured more  
 and more; 170  
 And, ages after he was laid in earth,  
 "The good Lord Clifford" was the name  
 he bore.

## XXVI.

## LINES

COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE TINTERN  
 ABBEY, ON REVISITING THE BANKS OF  
 THE WYE DURING A TOUR. JULY 13, 1798.

[Composed July 13, 1798.—Published 1798.]

FIVE years have past; five summers, with  
 the length  
 Of five long winters! and again I hear  
 These waters, rolling from their mountain-  
 springs  
 With a soft inland murmur.<sup>1</sup>—Once again  
 Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs, 5  
 That on a wild secluded scene impress  
 Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and  
 connect  
 The landscape with the quiet of the sky.  
 The day is come when I again repose  
 Here, under this dark sycamore, and view

<sup>1</sup> The river is not affected by the tides a few  
 miles above Tintern.

These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard-tufts, 11  
 Which at this season, with their unripe  
 fruits,  
 Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves  
 'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see  
 These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little lines 15  
 Of sportive wood run wild: these pastoral  
 farms,  
 Green to the very door; and wreaths of  
 smoke  
 Sent up, in silence, from among the trees!  
 With some uncertain notice, as might seem  
 Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless  
 woods, 20  
 Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his fire  
 The Hermit sits alone.

These beauteous forms,  
 Through a long absence, have not been to  
 me  
 As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:  
 But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din  
 Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,  
 In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,  
 Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;  
 And passing even into my purer mind, 29  
 With tranquil restoration:—feelings too  
 Of unremembered pleasure: such, perhaps,  
 As have no slight or trivial influence  
 On that best portion of a good man's life,  
 His little, nameless, unremembered, acts  
 Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,  
 To them I may have owed another gift, 36  
 Of aspect more sublime; that blessed  
 mood,  
 In which the burthen of the mystery,  
 In which the heavy and the weary weight  
 Of all this unintelligible world, 40  
 Is lightened:—that serene and blessed  
 mood,  
 In which the affections gently lead us on,—  
 Until, the breath of this corporeal frame  
 And even the motion of our human blood  
 Almost suspended, we are laid asleep 45  
 In body, and become a living soul:  
 While with an eye made quiet by the

We see into the life of things.

If this  
 Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft— 50  
 In darkness and amid the many shapes  
 Of joyless daylight; when the fretful stir  
 Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,  
 Have hung upon the beatings of my heart—  
 How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,  
 O sylvan Wye! thou wanderer thro' the  
 woods, 56  
 How often has my spirit turned to thee!

And now, with gleams of half-extin-  
 guished thought,  
 With many recognitions dim and faint,  
 And somewhat of a sad perplexity, 60  
 The picture of the mind revives again:  
 While here I stand, not only with the sense  
 Of present pleasure, but with pleasing  
 thoughts  
 That in this moment there is life and food  
 For future years. And so I dare to hope,  
 Though changed, no doubt, from what I  
 was when first 66  
 I came among these hills; when like a roe  
 I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides  
 Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,  
 Wherever nature led: more like a man 70  
 Flying from something that he dreads  
 than one  
 Who sought the thing he loved. For na-  
 ture then  
 (The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,  
 And their glad animal movements all gone  
 by)  
 To me was all in all.—I cannot paint 75  
 What then I was. The sounding cataract  
 Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,  
 The mountain, and the deep and gloomy  
 wood,  
 Their colours and their forms, were then 80  
 to me  
 An appetite; a feeling and a love,  
 That had no need of a remoter charm,  
 By thought supplied, nor any interest  
 Unborrowed from the eye.—That time is  
 past,  
 And all its aching joys are now no more,  
 And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this 85  
 Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other  
 gifts

Have followed; for such loss, I would  
believe,

Abundant recompense. For I have learned  
To look on nature, not as in the hour  
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing often-  
times 90

The still, sad music of humanity,  
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample  
power

To chasten and subdue. And I have felt  
A presence that disturbs me with the joy  
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime 95  
Of something far more deeply interfused,  
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,  
And the round ocean and the living air,  
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:  
A motion and a spirit, that impels 100  
All thinking things, all objects of all  
thought,

And rolls through all things. Therefore  
am I still

A lover of the meadows and the woods,  
And mountains; and of all that we behold  
From this green earth; of all the mighty  
world 105

Of eye, and ear,—both what they half  
create,<sup>1</sup>

And what perceive; well pleased to re-  
cognise

In nature and the language of the sense  
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the  
nurse,

The guide, the guardian of my heart, and  
soul 110

Of all my moral being.

Nor perchance,

If I were not thus taught, should I the  
more

Suffer my genial spirits to decay:

For thou art with me here upon the banks  
Of this fair river; thou my dearest Friend,  
My dear, dear Friend; and in thy voice I  
catch 116

The language of my former heart, and read  
My former pleasures in the shooting lights  
Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little while  
May I behold in thee what I was once,

My dear, dear Sister! and this prayer I  
make, 121

Knowing that Nature never did betray  
The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege,  
Through all the years of this our life, to lead  
From joy to joy: for she can so inform 125  
The mind that is within us, so impress  
With quietness and beauty, and so feed  
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil  
tongues,

Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish  
men,

Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all  
The dreary intercourse of daily life, 131  
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb  
Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold  
Is full of blessings. Therefore let the  
moon

Shine on thee in thy solitary walk; 135  
And let the misty mountain-winds be free  
To blow against thee: and, in after years,  
When these wild ecstasies shall be matured  
Into a sober pleasure; when thy mind  
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms, 140  
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place  
For all sweet sounds and harmonies; oh!  
then,

If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,  
Should be thy portion, with what healing  
thoughts

Of tender joy wilt thou remember me, 145  
And these my exhortations! Nor, per-  
chance—

If I should be where I no more can hear  
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes  
these gleams

Of past existence—wilt thou then forget  
That on the banks of this delightful stream  
We stood together; and that I, so long  
A worshipper of Nature, hither came 152  
Unwearied in that service: rather say  
With warmer love—oh! with far deeper  
zeal

Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget  
That after many wanderings, many years  
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty  
cliffs, 157

And this green pastoral landscape, were  
to me

More dear, both for themselves and for  
thy sake!

<sup>1</sup> This line has a close resemblance to an admirable line of Young's, the exact expression of which I do not recollect.

## XXVII.

[Composed 1803.—Published 1807.]

It is no Spirit who from heaven hath  
 flown,  
 And is descending on his embassy;  
 Nor Traveller gone from earth the heavens  
 to espy!  
 'Tis Hesperus—there he stands with glit-  
 tering crown,  
 First admonition that the sun is down! 5  
 For yet it is broad day-light: clouds  
 pass by;  
 A few are near him still—and now the sky,  
 He hath it to himself—'tis all his own.  
 O most ambitious Star! an inquest  
 wrought  
 Within me when I recognised thy light;  
 A moment I was startled at the sight: 11  
 And, while I gazed, there came to me a  
 thought  
 That I might step beyond my natural race  
 As thou seem'st now to do; might one day  
 trace  
 Some ground not mine; and, strong her  
 strength above, 15  
 My Soul, an Apparition in the place,  
 Tread there with steps that no one shall  
 improve!

## XXVIII.

## FRENCH REVOLUTION,

AS IT APPEARED TO ENTHUSIASTS AT ITS  
 COMMENCEMENT.<sup>1</sup> REPRINTED FROM  
 "THE FRIEND."

[Composed 1804.—Published October 26, 1809 (*The Friend*); ed. 1815.]

Oh! pleasant exercise of hope and joy!  
 For mighty were the auxiliars which then  
 stood  
 Upon our side, we who were strong in love!  
 Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,  
 But to be young was very heaven!—Oh!  
 times, 5  
 In which the meagre, stale, forbidding ways

<sup>1</sup> This and the Extract, page 89, and the first  
 Piece of this Class, are from the unpublished  
 Poem of which some account is given in the  
 Preface to *THE EXCURSION*.

Of custom, law, and statute, took at once  
 The attraction of a country in romance!  
 When Reason seemed the most to assert  
 her rights,  
 When most intent on making of herself to  
 A prime Enchantress—to assist the work  
 Which then was going forward in her  
 name!  
 Not favoured spots alone, but the whole  
 earth,  
 The beauty wore of promise, that which  
 sets  
 (As at some moment might not be unfelt  
 Among the bowers of paradise itself) 16  
 The budding rose above the rose full  
 blown.  
 What temper at the prospect did not wake  
 To happiness unthought of? The inert  
 Were roused, and lively natures rapt away!  
 They who had fed their childhood upon  
 dreams, 21  
 The playfellows of fancy, who had made  
 All powers of swiftness, subtilty, and  
 strength  
 Their ministers,—who in lordly wise had  
 stirred  
 Among the grandest objects of the sense,  
 And dealt with whatsoever they found  
 there 26  
 As if they had within some lurking right  
 To wield it;—they, too, who, of gentle  
 mood,  
 Had watched all gentle motions, and to  
 these  
 Had fitted their own thoughts, schemers  
 more mild, 30  
 And in the region of their peaceful  
 selves;—  
 Now was it that both found, the meek and  
 lofty  
 Did both find, helpers to their heart's  
 desire,  
 And stuff at hand, plastic as they could  
 wish;  
 Were called upon to exercise their skill, 35  
 Not in Utopia, subterranean fields,  
 Or some secreted island, Heaven knows  
 where!  
 But in the very world, which is the world  
 Of all of us,—the place where in the end  
 We find our happiness, or not at all! 40

## XXIX.

[Composed 1806.—Published 1807.]

Yes, it was the mountain Echo,  
Solitary, clear, profound,  
Answering to the shouting Cuckoo,  
Giving to her sound for sound!

Unsolicited reply 5  
To a babbling wanderer sent;  
Like her ordinary cry,  
Like—but oh, how different!  
Hears not also mortal Life?  
Hear not we, unthinking Creatures! 10  
Slaves of folly, love, or strife—  
Voices of two different natures?

Have not *we* too?—yes, we have  
Answers, and we know not whence;  
Echoes from beyond the grave,  
Recognised intelligence! 15

Such rebounds our inward ear  
Catches sometimes from afar—  
Listen, ponder, hold them dear;  
For of God,—of God they are. 20

## XXX.

TO A SKYLARK<sup>1</sup>.

[Composed 1825.—Published 1827.]

ETHEREAL minstrel! pilgrim of the sky!  
Dost thou despise the earth where cares  
abound?

Or, while the wings aspire, are heart and  
eye

Both with thy nest upon the dewy  
ground?

Thy nest which thou canst drop into at  
will, 5

Those quivering wings composed, that  
music still!

Leave to the nightingale her shady wood;  
A privacy of glorious light is thine;  
Whence thou dost pour upon the world a  
flood

Of harmony, with instinct more divine; 10

<sup>1</sup> For Stanza ii. of this poem, omitted in 1845  
and 1849–50, see note 2, page 153.—Ed.

Type of the wise who soar, but never  
roam;  
True to the kindred points of Heaven and  
Home!

## XXXI.

## LAODAMIA.

[Composed 1814.—Published 1815.]

“WITH sacrifice before the rising morn  
Vows have I made by fruitless hope in-  
spired;  
And from the infernal Gods, ’mid shades  
forlorn  
Of night, my slaughtered Lord have I  
required  
Celestial pity I again implore;— 5  
Restore him to my sight—great Jove,  
restore!”

So speaking, and by fervent love endowed  
With faith, the Suppliant heavenward  
lifts her hands;  
While, like the sun emerging from a  
cloud,  
Her countenance brightens—and her eye  
expands; 10  
Her bosom heaves and spreads, her stature  
grows;  
And she expects the issue in repose.

O terror! what hath she perceived?—O  
joy!

What doth she look on?—whom doth she  
behold?

Her Hero slain upon the beach of Troy? 15  
His vital presence? his corporeal mould?  
It is—if sense deceive her not—’tis He!  
And a God leads him, winged Mercury!

Mild Hermes spake—and touched her  
with his wand

That calms all fear; “Such grace hath  
crowned thy prayer, 20

Laodamia! that at Jove’s command  
Thy Husband walks the paths of upper  
air:

He comes to tarry with thee three hours’  
space;

Accept the gift, behold him face to face!”

Forth sprang the impassioned Queen her  
Lord to clasp ; 25

Again that consummation she essayed ;  
But unsubstantial Form eludes her grasp  
As often as that eager grasp was made.  
The Phantom parts—but parts to re-unite,  
And re-assume his place before her sight.

“Protesiláus, lo ! thy guide is gone ! 31  
Confirm, I pray, the vision with thy voice :  
This is our palace,—yonder is thy throne ;  
Speak, and the floor thou tread'st on will  
rejoice.

Not to appal me have the gods bestowed  
This precious boon ; and blest a sad  
abode.” 36

“Great Jove, Laodamia ! doth not leave  
His gifts imperfect :—Spectre though I be,  
I am not sent to scare thee or deceive ;  
But in reward of thy fidelity. 40  
And something also did my worth obtain ;  
For fearless virtue bringeth boundless gain.

“Thou knowest, the Delphic oracle fore-  
told

That the first Greek who touched the  
Trojan strand

Should die ; but me the threat could not  
withhold : 45

A generous cause a victim did demand ;  
And forth I leapt upon the sandy plain ;  
A self-devoted chief—by Hector slain.”

“Supreme of Heroes—bravest, noblest,  
best !

Thy matchless courage I bewail no more,  
Which then, when tens of thousands were  
deprest 51

By doubt, propelled thee to the fatal shore ;  
Thou found'st—and I forgive thee—here  
thou art—

A nobler counsellor than my poor heart.

“But thou, though capable of sternest  
deed, 55

Wert kind as resolute, and good as brave ;  
And he, whose power restores thee, hath  
decreed

Thou shouldst elude the malice of the  
grave :

Redundant are thy locks, thy lips as fair  
As when their breath enriched Thessalian  
air. 60

“No Spectre greets me,—no vain Shadow  
this ;

Come, blooming Hero, place thee by my  
side !

Give, on this well-known couch, one nup-  
tial kiss

To me, this day, a second time thy bride !”  
Jove frowned in heaven : the conscious  
Parce threw 65

Upon those roseate lips a Stygian hue.

“This visage tells thee that my doom is  
past :

Nor should the change be mourned, even  
if the joys

Of sense were able to return as fast  
And surely as they vanish. Earth de-  
stroys 70

Those raptures duly—Erebus disdains :  
Calm pleasures there abide—majestic  
pains.

“Be taught, O faithful Consort, to control  
Rebellious passion : for the Gods approve  
The depth, and not the tumult, of the  
soul ; 75

A fervent, not ungovernable, love.  
Thy transports moderate ; and meekly  
mourn

When I depart, for brief is my sojourn—”

“Ah wherefore?—Did not Hercules by  
force

Wrest from the guardian Monster of the  
tomb 80

Alcester, a reanimated corse,  
Given back to dwell on earth in vernal  
bloom ?

Medea's spells dispersed the weight of  
years,

And Æson stood a youth 'mid youthful  
peers. 84

“The Gods to us are merciful—and they  
Yet further may relent : for mightier far  
Than strength of nerve and sinew, or the  
sway,

Of magic potent over sun and star,  
Is love, though oft to agony distressed,  
And though his favourite seat be feeble  
woman's breast. 90

"But if thou goest, I follow—" "Peace!"  
he said,—

She looked upon him and was calmed and  
cheered;

The ghastly colour from his lips had fled;  
In his deportment, shape, and mien,  
appeared

Elysian beauty, melancholy grace, 95  
Brought from a pensive though a happy  
place.

He spake of love, such love as Spirits feel  
In worlds whose course is equable and  
pure;

No fears to beat away—no strife to heal—  
The past unsighed for, and the future  
sure; 100

Spake of heroic arts in graver mood  
Revived, with finer harmony pursued;

Of all that is most beauteous—imaged  
there

In happier beauty; more pellucid streams,  
An ampler ether, a diviner air, 105  
And fields invested with purpureal gleams;  
Climes which the sun, who sheds the  
brightest day

Earth knows, is all unworthy to survey.

Yet there the Soul shall enter which hath  
earned

That privilege by virtue.—"H," said he,  
"The end of man's existence I discerned,  
Who from ignoble games and revelry  
Could draw, when we had parted, vain  
delight,

While tears were thy best pastime, day  
and night;

"And while my youthful peers before my  
eyes 115

(Each hero following his peculiar bent)  
Prepared themselves for glorious enterprise  
By martial sports,—or, seated in the tent,  
Chieftains and kings in council were de-  
tained;

What time the fleet at Aulis lay enchained.

"The wished-for wind was given :—I then  
revolved 121

The oracle, upon the silent sea;  
And, if no worthier led the way, resolved  
That, of a thousand vessels, mine should be

The foremost prow in pressing to the  
strand,— 125  
Mine the first blood that tinged the Trojan  
sand.

"Yet bitter, oft-times bitter, was the pang  
When of thy loss I thought, beloved Wife!  
On thee too fondly did my memory hang,  
And on the joys we shared in mortal life,—  
The paths which we had trod—these foun-  
tains, flowers; 131  
My new-planned cities, and unfinished  
towers.

"But should suspense permit the Foe to  
cry,

'Behold they tremble!—haughty their  
array,

Yet of their number no one dares to die?'  
In soul I swept the indignity away: 136  
Old frailties then recurred:—but lofty  
thought,

In act embodied, my deliverance wrought.

"And Thou, though strong in love, art all  
too weak

In reason, in self-government too slow;  
I counsel thee by fortitude to seek 141  
Our blest re-union in the shades below.

The invisible world with thee hath sym-  
pathised;

Be thy affections raised and solemnised.

"Learn, by a mortal yearning, to ascend—  
Seeking a higher object. Love was given,  
Encouraged, sanctioned, chiefly for that  
end; 147

For this the passion to excess was driven—  
That self might be annulled: her bondage  
prove

The fetters of a dream opposed to love."—

Aloud she shrieked! for Hermes re-  
appears! 151

Round the dear Shade she would have  
clung—'tis vain:

The hours are past—too brief had they  
been years;

And him no mortal effort can detain:

Swift, toward the realms that know not  
earthly day, 155

He through the portal takes his silent way,  
And on the palace-floor a lifeless corse She  
lay.

Thus, all in vain exhorted and reproved,  
 She perished; and, as for a wilful crime,  
 By the just Gods whom no weak pity  
     moved, 160  
 Was doomed to wear out her appointed  
     time,  
 Apart from happy Ghosts, that gather  
     flowers  
 Of blissful quiet 'mid unfading bowers.<sup>1</sup>  
 —Yet tears to human suffering are due;  
 And mortal hopes defeated and o'erthrown  
 Are mourned by man, and not by man  
     alone, 166  
 As fondly he believes.—Upon the side  
 Of Hellespont (such faith was entertained)  
 A knot of spiry trees for ages grew  
 From out the tomb of him for whom she  
     died; 170  
 And ever, when such stature they had  
     gained  
 That Ilium's walls were subject to their  
     view,  
 The trees' tall summits withered at the  
     sight;  
 A constant interchange of growth and  
     blight!<sup>2</sup>

## XXXII.

## DION.

[Composed 1816.—Published 1820.]

(SEE PLUTARCH.)

## [ I. ]

[FAIR is the Swan, whose majesty, pre-  
     vailling  
 O'er breezeless water, on Locarno's lake,  
 Bears him on while proudly sailing  
 He leaves behind a moon-illumined wake:  
 Behold! the mantling spirit of reserve 5  
 Fashions his neck into a goodly curve;

<sup>1</sup> For an account of the important changes—material as well as formal—introduced from time to time into this stanza, see Editor's note, p. 901.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> For the account of these long-lived trees, see Pliny's "Natural History," lib. xvi. cap. 44; and for the features in the character of Protesilaus, see the "Iphigenia in Aulis" of Euripides. Virgil places the Shade of Laodamia in a mournful region, among unhappy Lovers,

— His Laodamia  
 It comes.—

An arch thrown back between luxuriant  
     wings  
 Of whitest garniture, like fir-tree boughs  
 To which, on some unruffled morning,  
     clings  
 A flaky weight of winter's purest snows!  
 —Behold!—as with a gushing impulse  
     heaves 11  
 That downy prow, and softly cleaves  
 The mirror of the crystal flood,  
 Vanish inverted hill, and shadowy wood,  
 And pendent rocks, where'er, in gliding  
     state, 15  
 Winds the mute Creature without visible  
     Mate  
 Or Rival, save the Queen of night  
 Showering down a silver light,  
 From heaven, upon her chosen Favourite!]

## [ II. ]

[So pure, so bright, so fitted to embrace  
 Where'er he turned, a natural grace 20  
 Of haughtiness without pretence,  
     &c. &c. &c. (Edd. 1820, 1827, 1832).]

## I.

SERENE, and fitted to embrace,  
 Where'er he turned, a swan-like grace  
 Of haughtiness without pretence,  
 And to unfold a still magnificence,  
 Was princely Dion, in the power 5  
 And beauty of his happier hour.  
 And what pure homage *then* did wait  
 On Dion's virtues, while the lunar beam  
 Of Plato's genius, from its lofty sphere,  
 Fell round him in the grove of Academe,  
 Softening their inbred dignity austere—  
     That he, not too elate  
     With self-sufficing solitude,  
 But with majestic lowliness endued,  
 Might in the universal bosom reign, 15  
 And from affectionate observance gain  
 Help, under every change of adverse fate.

## II.

Five thousand warriors—O the rapturous  
     day!  
 Each crowned with flowers, and armed  
     with spear and shield,  
 Or ruder weapon which their course might  
     yield, 20  
 To Syracuse advance in bright array.

Who leads them on?—The anxious people  
 see  
 Long-exiled Dion marching at their head,  
 He also crowned with flowers of Sicily,  
 And in a white, far-beaming, corselet clad!  
 Pure transport undisturbed by doubt or  
 fear 26  
 The gazers feel; and, rushing to the plain,  
 Salute those strangers as a holy train  
 Or blest procession (to the Immortals  
 dear)  
 That brought their precious liberty again.  
 Lo! when the gates are entered, on each  
 hand, 31  
 Down the long street, rich goblets filled  
 with wine  
 In seemly order stand,  
 On tables set, as if for rites divine;—  
 And, as the great Deliverer marches by,  
 He looks on festal ground with fruits  
 bestrown; 36  
 And flowers are on his person thrown  
 In boundless prodigality;  
 Nor doth the general voice abstain from  
 prayer,  
 Invoking Dion's tutelary care, 40  
 As if a very Deity he were!

## III.

Mourn, hills and groves of Attica! and  
 mourn  
 Niessus, bending o'er thy classic urn!  
 Mourn, and lament for him whose spirit  
 dreads  
 Your once sweet memory, studious walks  
 and shades! 45  
 For him who to divinity aspired,  
 Not on the breath of popular applause,  
 But through dependence on the sacred  
 laws  
 Framed in the schools where Wisdom  
 dwelt retired,  
 Intent to trace the ideal path of right 50  
 (More fair than heaven's broad causeway  
 paved with stars)  
 Which Dion learned to measure with  
 sublime delight;—  
 But He hath overleaped the eternal bars;  
 And, following guides whose craft holds  
 no consent

With aught that breathes the ethereal  
 element, 55  
 Hath stained the robes of civil power  
 with blood,  
 Unjustly shed, though for the public  
 good.  
 Whence doubts that came too late, and  
 wishes vain,  
 Hollow excuses, and triumphant pain;  
 And oft his cogitations sink as low 60  
 As, through the abysses of a joyless heart,  
 The heaviest plummet of despair can go—  
 But whence that sudden check? that  
 fearful start!  
 He hears an uncouth sound—  
 Anon his lifted eyes 65  
 Saw, at a long-drawn gallery's dusky  
 bound,  
 A Shape of more than mortal size  
 And hideous aspect, stalking round and  
 round!  
 A woman's garb the Phantom wore,  
 And fiercely swept the marble floor,—  
 Like Auster whirling to and fro, 71  
 His force on Caspian foam to try;  
 Or Boreas when he scours the snow  
 That skins the plains of Thessaly,  
 Or when aloft on Mænalus he stops 75  
 His flight, 'mid eddying pine-tree tops!

## IV.

So, but from toil less sign of profit  
 reaping,  
 The sullen Spectre to her purpose bowed,  
 Sweeping—vehemently sweeping—  
 No pause admitted, no design avowed! 80  
 "Avaunt, inexplicable Guest!—avaunt,"  
 Exclaimed the Chieftain—"let me rather  
 see  
 The coronal that coiling vipers make;  
 The torch that flames with many a lurid  
 flake,  
 And the long train of doleful pageantry 85  
 Which they behold, whom vengeful Furies  
 haunt;  
 Who, while they struggle from the scourge  
 to flee,  
 Move where the blasted soil is not  
 unworn,  
 And, in their anguish, bear what other  
 minds have borne!"

## v.

But Shapes, that come not at an earthly  
call, 90  
Will not depart when mortal voices bid;  
Lords of the visionary eye whose lid,  
Once raised, remains aghast, and will not  
fall!  
Ye Gods, thought He, that servile Im-  
plement  
Obeys a mystical intent! 95  
Your Minister would brush away  
The spots that to my soul adhere;  
But should she labour night and day,  
They will not, cannot disappear;  
Whence angry perturbations,—and that  
look 100  
Which no philosophy can brook!

## vi.

Ill-fated Chief! there are whose hopes are  
built  
Upon the ruins of thy glorious name;  
Who, through the portal of one moment's  
guilt,  
Pursue thee with their deadly aim! 105  
O matchless perfidy! portentous lust  
Of monstrous crime!—that horror-striking  
blade,  
Drawn in defiance of the Gods, hath laid  
The noble Syracusan low in dust!  
Shuddered the walls—the marble city  
wept— 110  
And sylvan places heaved a pensive sigh;  
But in calm peace the appointed Victim  
slept,  
As he had fallen in magnanimity;  
Of spirit too capacious to require  
That Destiny her course should change;  
too just 115  
To his own native greatness to desire  
That wretched boon, days lengthened by  
mistrust.  
So were the hopeless troubles, that in-  
volved  
The soul of Dion, instantly dissolved.  
Released from life and cares of princely  
state, 120  
He left this moral grafted on his Fate;  
“Him only pleasure leads, and peace  
attends,

Him, only him, the shield of Jove de-  
fends,  
Whose means are fair and spotless as his  
ends.”

## XXXIII.

## THE PASS OF KIRKSTONE.

[Composed 1817.—Published 1820.]

## I.

WITHIN the mind strong fancies work,  
A deep delight the bosom thrills,  
Oft as I pass along the fork  
Of these fraternal hills:  
Where, save the rugged road, we find 5  
No appanage of human kind,  
Nor hint of man; if stone or rock  
Seem not his handy-work to mock  
By something cognizably shaped;  
Mockery—or model roughly hewn, 10  
And left as if by earthquake strewn,  
Or from the Flood escaped:  
Altars for Druid service fit;  
(But where no fire was ever lit,  
Unless the glow-worm to the skies 15  
Thence offer nightly sacrifice)  
Wrinkled Egyptian monument;  
Green moss-grown tower; or hoary tent;  
Tents of a camp that never shall be  
razed—  
On which four thousand years have  
gazed! 20

## II.

Ye ploughshares sparkling on the slopes!  
Ye snow-white lambs that trip  
Imprisoned 'mid the formal props  
Of restless ownership!  
Ye trees, that may to-morrow fall 25  
To feed the insatiate Prodigal!  
Lawns, houses, chattels, groves, and  
fields,  
All that the fertile valley shields;  
Wages of folly—baits of crime,  
Of life's uneasy game the stake, 30  
Playthings that keep the eyes awake  
Of drowsy, dotard Time;—  
O care! O guilt!—O vales and plains,  
Here, 'mid his own unweaved domains,  
A Genius dwells, that can subdue 35  
At once all memory of You,—

Most potent when mists veil the sky,  
Mists that distort and magnify,  
While the coarse rushes, to the sweeping  
breeze,  
Sigh forth their ancient melodies ! 40

## III.

List to those shriller notes !—*that* march  
Perchance was on the blast,  
When, through this Height's inverted  
arch,  
Rome's earliest legion passed !  
—They saw, adventurously impelled, 45  
And older eyes than theirs beheld,  
This block—and yon, whose church-like  
frame  
Gives to this savage Pass its name.  
Aspiring Road ! that lov'st to hide  
Thy daring in a vapoury bourn, 50  
Not seldom may the hour return  
When thou shalt be my guide :  
And I (as all men may find cause,  
When life is at a weary pause,  
And they have panted up the hill 55  
Of duty with reluctant will)  
Be thankful, even though tired and faint,  
For the rich bounties of constraint ;  
Whence oft invigorating transports flow  
That choice lacked courage to bestow ! 60

## IV.

My Soul was grateful for delight  
That wore a threatening brow ;  
A veil is lifted—can she slight  
The scene that opens now ?  
Though habitation none appear, 65  
The greenness tells, man must be there ;  
The shelter—that the perspective  
Is of the clime in which we live ;  
Where Toil pursues his daily round ;  
Where Pity sheds sweet tears—and Love, 71  
In woodbine bower or birchen grove,  
Inflicts his tender wound.  
—Who comes not hither ne'er shall know  
How beautiful the world below ;  
Nor can he guess how lightly leaps 75  
The brook adown the rocky steep.  
Farewell, thou desolate Domain !  
Hope, pointing to the cultured plain,  
Carols like a shepherd-boy ;  
And who is she?—Can that be Joy ! 80

Who, with a sunbeam for her guide,  
Smoothly skims the meadows wide ;  
While Faith, from yonder opening cloud,  
To hill and vale proclaims aloud,  
“Whate'er the weak may dread, the  
wicked dare, 85  
Thy lot, O Man, is good, thy portion  
fair !”

## XXXIV.

## TO ENTERPRISE.

[Composed 1820 (?).—Published 1822.]

KEEP for the Young the impassioned  
smile  
Shed from thy countenance, as I see thee  
stand  
High on that chalky cliff of Britain's  
Isle,  
A slender volume grasping in thy hand—  
(Perchance the pages that relate 5  
The various turns of Crusoe's fate)—  
Ah, spare the exulting smile,  
And drop thy pointing finger bright  
As the first flash of beacon light ;  
But neither veil thy head in shadows dim,  
Nor turn thy face away 11  
From One who, in the evening of his day,  
To thee would offer no presumptuous  
hymn !

## I.

Bold Spirit ! who art free to rove  
Among the starry courts of Jove, 15  
And oft in splendour dost appear  
Embodied to poetic eyes,  
While traversing this nether sphere,  
Where Mortals call thee ENTERPRISE.  
Daughter of Hope ! her favourite Child,  
Whom she to young Ambition bore, 21  
When hunter's arrow first defiled  
The grove, and stained the turf with gore ;  
Thee winged Fancy took, and nursed  
On broad Euphrates' palmy shore, 25  
And where the mightier Waters burst  
From caves of Indian mountains hoar !  
She wrapped thee in a panther's skin ;  
And Thou, thy favourite food to win,  
The flame-eyed eagle oft wouldst scare 30  
From her rock-fortress in mid air,

With infant shout ; and often sweep,  
 Paired with the ostrich, o'er the plain ;  
 Or, tired with sport, wouldst sink asleep  
 Upon the couchant lion's mane ! 35  
 With rolling years thy strength increased ;  
 And, far beyond thy native East,  
 To thee, by varying titles known  
 As variously thy power was shown,  
 Did incense-bearing altars rise, 40  
 Which caught the blaze of sacrifice,  
 From suppliants panting for the skies !

## II.

What though this ancient Earth be trod  
 No more by step of Demi-god  
 Mounting from glorious deed to deed 45  
 As thou from clime to clime didst lead ;  
 Yet still the bosom beating high,  
 And the hushed farewell of an eye  
 Where no procrastinating gaze  
 A last infirmity betrays, 50  
 Prove that thy heaven-descended sway  
 Shall ne'er submit to cold decay.  
 By thy divinity impelled,  
 The Stripling seeks the tented field ;  
 The aspiring Virgin kneels ; and, pale 55  
 With awe, receives the hallowed veil,  
 A soft and tender Heroine  
 Vowed to severer discipline ;  
 Inflamed by thee, the blooming Boy  
 Makes of the whistling shrouds a toy, 60  
 And of the ocean's dismal breast  
 A play-ground,—or a couch of rest ;  
 'Mid the blank world of snow and ice,  
 Thou to his dangers dost enchain  
 The Chamois-chaser awed in vain 65  
 By chasm or dizzy precipice ;  
 And hast Thou not with triumph seen  
 How soaring Mortals glide between  
 Or through the clouds, and brave the light  
 With bolder than Icarian flight ? 70  
 How they, in bells of crystal, dive—  
 Where winds and waters cease to strive—  
 For no unholy visitings,  
 Among the monsters of the Deep ;  
 And all the sad and precious things 75  
 Which there in ghastly silence sleep ?  
 Or adverse tides and currents headed,  
 And breathless calms no longer dreaded,  
 In never-slackening voyage go  
 Straight as an arrow from the bow ; 80

And, slighting sails and scorning oars,  
 Keep faith with Time on distant shores ?  
 —Within our fearless reach are placed  
 The secrets of the burning Waste ;  
 Egyptian tombs unlock their dead, 85  
 Nile trembles at his fountain head ;  
 Thou speak'st—and lo ! the polar Seas  
 Unbosom their last mysteries.  
 —But oh ! what transports, what sublime  
 reward,  
 Won from the world of mind, dost thou  
 prepare 90  
 For philosophic Sage ; or high-souled  
 Bard  
 Who, for thy service trained in lonely  
 woods,  
 Hath fed on pageants floating through  
 the air,  
 Or calentured in depth of limpid floods ;  
 Nor grieves—tho' doomed thro' silent  
 night to bear 95  
 The domination of his glorious themes,  
 Or struggle in the net-work of thy dreams !

## III.

If there be movements in the Patriot's soul,  
 From source still deeper, and of higher  
 worth,  
 'Tis thine the quickening impulse to  
 control, 100  
 And in due season send the mandate  
 forth ;  
 Thy call a prostrate Nation can restore,  
 When but a single Mind resolves to  
 crouch no more.

## IV.

Dread Minister of wrath !  
 Who to their destined punishment dost  
 urge 105  
 The Pharaohs of the earth, the men of  
 hardened heart !  
 Not unassisted by the flattering stars,  
 Thou strew'st temptation o'er the path  
 When they in pomp depart  
 With trampling horses and refulgent  
 cars, 110  
 Soon to be swallowed by the briny surge ;  
 Or cast, for lingering death, on unknown  
 strands ;  
 Or caught amid a whirl of desert sands—

An Army now, and now a living hill  
That a brief while heaves with convulsive  
throes— 115

Then all is still;  
Or, to forget their madness and their woes,  
Wrapt in a winding-sheet of spotless  
snows!

## V.

Back flows the willing current of my Song:  
If to provoke such doom the Impious  
dare, 120

Why should it daunt a blameless prayer?  
—Bold Goddess! range our Youth among;  
Nor let thy genuine impulse fail to beat  
In hearts no longer young;  
Still may a veteran Few have pride 125  
In thoughts whose sternness makes them  
sweet;

In fixed resolves by Reason justified;  
That to their object cleave like sleet  
Whitening a pine tree's northern side,  
When fields are naked far and wide, 130  
And withered leaves, from earth's cold  
breast

Up-caught in whirlwinds, nowhere can  
find rest.

## VI.

But if such homage thou disdain  
As doth with mellowing years agree,  
One rarely absent from thy train 135  
More humble favours may obtain  
For thy contented Votary.  
She who incites the frolic lambs  
In presence of their heedless dams,  
And to the solitary fawn 140  
Vouchsafes her lessons, bounteous Nymph  
That wakes the breeze, the sparkling  
lymph

Doth hurry to the lawn;  
She who inspires that strain of joyance  
holy

Which the sweet Bird, misnamed the  
melancholy, 145  
Pours forth in shady groves, shall plead  
for me;

And vernal mornings opening bright  
With views of undefined delight,  
And cheerful songs, and suns that shine  
On busy days, with thankful nights, be  
mine. 150

## VII.

But thou, O Goddess! in thy favourite Isle  
(Freedom's impregnable redoubt,  
The wide earth's storehouse fenced about  
With breakers roaring to the gales  
That stretch a thousand thousand sails) 155  
Quicken the slothful, and exalt the vile!—  
Thy impulse is the life of Fame;  
Glad Hope would almost cease to be  
If torn from thy society;  
And Love, when worthiest of his name, 160  
Is proud to walk the earth with Thee!

## XXXV.

## TO —,

ON HER FIRST ASCENT TO THE SUMMIT OF  
HELVETLYN.

[Composed 1816.—Published 1820.]

INMATE of a mountain-dwelling,  
Thou hast clomb aloft, and gazed  
From the watch-towers of Helvellyn;  
Awd, delighted, and amazed!

Potent was the spell that bound thee 5  
Not unwilling to obey;  
For blue Ether's arms, flung round thee,  
Stilled the pantings of dismay.

Lo! the dwindled woods and meadows;  
What a vast abyss is there! 10  
Lo! the clouds, the solemn shadows,  
And the glistenings—heavenly fair!

And a record of commotion  
Which a thousand ridges yield;  
Ridge, and gulf, and distant ocean 15  
Gleaming like a silver shield!

Maiden! now take flight;—inherit  
Alps or Andes—they are thine!  
With the morning's roseate Spirit  
Sweep their length of snowy line; 20

Or survey their bright dominions  
In the gorgeous colours drest  
Flung from off the purple pinions,  
Evening spreads throughout the west!

Thine are all the choral<sup>1</sup> fountains 25  
Warbling in each sparry vault  
Of the untrodden lunar mountains;  
Listen to their songs!—or halt,

<sup>1</sup> "Choral", edd. 1820, 1827; "coral", 1832-1849.—Ed.

To Niphates' top invited,  
 Whither spiteful Satan steered; 30  
 Or descend where the ark alighted,  
 When the green earth re-appeared;  
 For the power of hills is on thee,  
 As was witnessed through thine eye  
 Then, when old Helvellyn won thee 35  
 To confess their majesty!

## XXXVI.

## TO A YOUNG LADY,

WHO HAD BEEN REPROACHED FOR TAKING  
 LONG WALKS IN THE COUNTRY.

[Composed 1801 (?).—Published *Morning Post*,  
 February 11, 1802; ed. 1807.]

DEAR Child of Nature, let them rail!  
 —There is a nest in a green dale,  
 A harbour and a hold;  
 Where thou, a Wife and Friend, shalt see  
 Thy own heart-stirring days, and be 5  
 A light to young and old.

There, healthy as a shepherd boy,  
 And treading among flowers of joy  
 Which at no season fade,  
 Thou, while thy babes around thee cling, 10  
 Shalt show us how divine a thing  
 A Woman may be made.

Thy thoughts and feelings shall not die,  
 Nor leave thee, when grey hairs are nigh,  
 A melancholy slave; 15  
 But an old age serene and bright,  
 And lovely as a Lapland night,  
 Shall lead thee to thy grave.

## XXXVII.

## WATER FOWL.

[Composed 1812 (?).—Published 1823; ed. 1827.]

"Let me be allowed the aid of verse to describe  
 the evolutions which these visitants sometimes  
 perform, on a fine day towards the close of  
 winter."—*Extract from the Author's Book on  
 the Lakes* (edition of 1823.—En.).

<sup>1</sup> These lines form portion of *The Recluse*,  
*Book I.*, much of which was undoubtedly com-  
 posed in 1800. In 1836 Wordsworth assigned them  
 to the year 1812; but his memory on such mat-  
 ters was treacherous, and it is quite possible that  
 they were written as far back as 1800.—En.

MARK how the feathered tenants of the  
 flood,  
 With grace of motion that might scarcely  
 seem

Inferior to angelical, prolong  
 Their curious pastime! shaping in mid air  
 (And sometimes with ambitious wing that  
 soars 5

High as the level of the mountain-tops)  
 A circuit ampler than the lake beneath—  
 Their own domain; but ever, while intent  
 On tracing and retracing that large round,  
 Their jubilant activity evolves 10

Hundreds of curves and circlets, to and fro,  
 Upward and downward, progress intricate  
 Yet unperplexed, as if one spirit swayed  
 Their indefatigable flight. 'Tis done—  
 Ten times, or more, I fancied it had ceased;  
 But lo! the vanished company again 16  
 Ascending; they approach—I hear their  
 wings,

Faint, faint at first; and then an eager  
 sound,

Past in a moment—and as faint again!  
 They tempt the sun to sport amid their  
 plumes; 20

They tempt the water, or the gleaming ice,  
 To show them a fair image; 'tis themselves,  
 Their own fair forms, upon the glimmer-  
 ing plain,

Painted more soft and fair as they descend  
 Almost to touch;—then up again aloft, 25  
 Up with a sally and a flash of speed,  
 As if they scorned both resting-place and  
 rest!

## XXXVIII.

VIEW FROM THE TOP OF BLACK  
 COMB<sup>2</sup>.

[Composed 1813.—Published 1815.]

THIS Height a ministering Angel might  
 select:

For from the summit of BLACK COMB  
 (dread name

<sup>2</sup> Black Comb stands at the southern extremity  
 of Cumberland: its base covers a much greater  
 extent of ground than any other mountain in  
 those parts; and, from its situation, the summit  
 commands a more extensive view than any other  
 point in Britain.

Derived from clouds and storms!) the  
 amplest range  
 Of unobstructed prospect may be seen  
 That British ground commands:—low  
 dusky tracts, 5  
 Where Trent is nursed, far southward!  
 Cambrian hills  
 To the south-west, a multitudinous show;  
 And, in a line of eye-sight linked with  
 these,  
 The hoary peaks of Scotland that give  
 birth  
 To Tiviot's stream, to Annan, Tweed, and  
 Clyde:— 10  
 Crowding the quarter whence the sun  
 comes forth  
 Gigantic mountains rough with crags;  
 beneath,  
 Right at the imperial station's western  
 base,  
 Main ocean, breaking audibly, and  
 stretched  
 Far into silent regions blue and pale;—  
 And visibly engirding Mona's Isle 16  
 That, as we left the plain, before our  
 sight  
 Stood like a lofty mount, uplifting  
 slowly  
 (Above the convex of the watery globe)  
 Into clear view the cultured fields that  
 streak 20  
 Her habitable shores, but now appears  
 A dwindled object, and submits to lie  
 At the spectator's feet.—Yon azure ridge,  
 Is it a perishable cloud? Or there  
 Do we behold the line of Erin's coast? 25  
 Land sometimes by the roving shepherd-  
 swain  
 (Like the bright confines of another  
 world)  
 Not doubtfully perceived.—Look home-  
 ward now!  
 In depth, in height, in circuit, how  
 serene  
 The spectacle, how pure!—Of Nature's  
 works, 30  
 In earth, and air, and earth-embracing  
 sea,  
 A revelation infinite it seems;  
 Display august of man's inheritance,  
 Of Britain's calm felicity and power!

## XXXIX.

## THE HAUNTED TREE.

TO —.

[Composed 1819.—Published 1820.]

THOSE silver clouds collected round the  
 sun  
 His mid-day warmth abate not, seeming  
 less  
 To overshadow than multiply his beams  
 By soft reflection—grateful to the sky,  
 To rocks, fields, woods. Nor doth our  
 human sense 5  
 Ask, for its pleasure, screen or canopy  
 More ample than the time-dismantled Oak  
 Spreads o'er this tuft of heath, which now,  
 attired  
 In the whole fulness of its bloom, affords  
 Couch beautiful as e'er for earthly use 10  
 Was fashioned; whether by the hand of  
 Art,  
 That eastern Sultan, amid flowers en-  
 wrought  
 On silken tissue, might diffuse his limbs  
 In languor; or by Nature, for repose  
 Of panting Wood-nymph, wearied with  
 the chase. 15  
 O Lady! fairer in thy Poet's sight  
 Than fairest spiritual creature of the  
 groves,  
 Approach;—and, thus invited, crown with  
 rest  
 The noon-tide hour: though truly some  
 there are  
 Whose footsteps superstitiously avoid 20  
 This venerable Tree; for, when the wind  
 Blows keenly, it sends forth a creaking  
 sound  
 (Above the general roar of woods and  
 crags)  
 Distinctly heard from far—a doleful note!  
 As if (so Grecian shepherds would have  
 deemed) 25  
 The Hamadryad, pent within, bewailed  
 Some bitter wrong. Nor is it unbelieved,  
 By ruder fancy, that a troubled ghost  
 Haunts the old trunk; lamenting deeds  
 of which  
 The flowery ground is conscious. But no  
 wind 30

Sweeps now along this elevated ridge;  
 Not even a zephyr stirs;—the obnoxious  
 Tree  
 Is mute; and, in his silence, would look  
 down,  
 O lovely Wanderer of the trackless hills,  
 On thy reclining form with more delight 35  
 Than his coevals in the sheltered vale  
 Seem to participate, the while they view  
 Their own far-stretching arms and leafy  
 heads  
 Vividly pictured in some glassy pool,  
 That, for a brief space, checks the hurrying  
 stream! 40

## XL.

## THE TRIAD.

[Composed 1828.—Published 1829 (*The Keepsake*);  
 ed. 1832.]

SHOW me the noblest Youth of present  
 time,  
 Whose trembling fancy would to love  
 give birth;  
 Some God or Hero, from the Olympian  
 clime  
 Returned, to seek a Consort upon earth;  
 Or, in no doubtful prospect, let me see 5  
 The brightest star of ages yet to be,  
 And I will mate and match him blissfully.  
 I will not fetch a Naiad from a flood  
 Pure as herself—(song lacks not mightier  
 power)  
 Nor leaf-crowned Dryad from a pathless  
 wood, 10  
 Nor Sea-nymph glistening from her coral  
 bower;  
 Mere Mortals, bodied forth in vision still,  
 Shall with Mount Ida's triple lustre fill  
 The chaster coverts of a British hill.  
 "Appear!—obey my lyre's command! 15  
 Come, like the Graces, hand in hand!  
 For ye, though not by birth allied,  
 Are Sisters in the bond of love;  
 Nor shall the tongue of envious pride  
 Presume those interweavings to reprove 20  
 In you, which that fair progeny of Jove  
 Learned from the tuneful spheres that  
 glide  
 In endless union, earth and sea above."

—I sing in vain;—the pines have hushed  
 their waving;  
 A peerless Youth expectant at my side, 25  
 Breathless as they, with unabated craving  
 Looks to the earth, and to the vacant air;  
 And, with a wandering eye that seems to  
 chide,  
 Asks of the clouds what occupants they  
 hide;—  
 But why solicit more than sight could  
 bear, 30  
 By casting on a moment all we dare?  
 Invoke we those bright Beings one by  
 one;  
 And what was boldly promised, truly  
 shall be done.

"Fear not a constraining measure!  
 —Yielding to this gentle spell, 35  
 Lucida! from domes of pleasure,  
 Or from cottage-sprinkled dell,  
 Come to regions solitary,  
 Where the eagle builds her aery,  
 Above the hermit's long-forsaken cell!" 40  
 —She comes!—behold  
 That Figure, like a ship with snow-white  
 sail!  
 Nearer she draws; a breeze uplifts her  
 veil;  
 Upon her coming wait  
 As pure a sunshine and as soft a gale 45  
 As e'er, on herbage covering earthly mould,  
 Tempted the bird of Juno to unfold  
 His richest splendour—when his veering  
 gait  
 And every motion of his starry train  
 Seem governed by a strain 50  
 Of music, audible to him alone.

"O Lady, worthy of earth's proudest  
 throne!  
 Nor less, by excellence of nature, fit  
 Beside an unambitious hearth to sit  
 Domestic queen, where grandeur is un-  
 known; 55  
 What living man could fear  
 The worst of Fortune's malice, wert Thou  
 near,  
 Humbling that lily-stem, thy sceptre meek,  
 That its fair flowers may from his cheek  
 Brush the too happy tear? 60

—Queen, and handmaid lowly !  
Whose skill can speed the day with lively  
cares,

And banish melancholy  
By all that mind invents or hand prepares;  
O Thou, against whose lip, without its  
smile 65

And in its silence even, no heart is proof;  
Whose goodness, sinking deep, would  
reconcile

The softest Nursling of a gorgeous palace  
To the bare life beneath the hawthorn-roof  
Of Sherwood's Archer, or in caves of  
Wallace— 70

Who that hath seen thy beauty could  
content

His soul with but a *glimpse* of heavenly  
day?

Who that hath loved thee, but would lay  
His strong hand on the wind, if it were  
bent

To take thee in thy majesty away? 75

—Pass onward (even the glancing deer  
Till we depart intrude not here;)

That mossy slope, o'er which the wood-  
bine throws

A canopy, is smoothed for thy repose !”

Glad moment is it when the throng 80

Of warblers in full concert strong

Strive, and not vainly strive, to rout

The lagging shower, and force coy Phœbus  
out,

Met by the rainbow's form divine,

Issuing from her cloudy shrine;— 85

So may the thrillings of the lyre

Prevail to further our desire,

While to these shades a sister Nymph I  
call.

“Come, if the notes thine ear may pierce,

Come, youngest of the lovely Three, 90

Submissive to the might of verse

And the dear voice of harmony,

By none more deeply felt than Thee !”

—I sang; and lo ! from pastimes virginal

She hastens to the tents 95

Of nature, and the lonely elements.

Air sparkles round her with a dazzling  
sheen;

But mark her glowing cheek, her vesture  
green !

And, as if wishful to disarm

Or to repay the potent Charm, 100

She bears the stringed lute of old romance,

That cheered the trellised arbour's privacy,

And soothed war-wearied knights in raft-  
ered hall.

How vivid, yet how delicate, her glee !

So tripped the Muse, inventress of the  
dance; 105

So, truant in waste woods, the blithe  
Euphrosyne !

But the ringlets of that head

Why are they ungarlanded ?

Why bedeck her temples less

Than the simplest shepherdess? 110

Is it not a brow inviting

Choicest flowers that ever breathed,

Which the myrtle would delight in

With Idalian rose enwreathed ?

But her humility is well content 115

With *one* wild floweret (call it not forlorn)

FLOWER OF THE WINDS, beneath her bosom  
worn—

Yet more for love than ornament.

Open, ye thickets ! let her fly,

Swift as a Thracian Nymph o'er field and  
height ! 120

For She, to all but those who love her, shy,

Would gladly vanish from a Stranger's  
sight ;

Though, where she is beloved and loves,

Light as the wheeling butterfly she moves;

Her happy spirit as a bird is free, 125

That rifles blossoms on a tree,

Turning them inside out with arch  
audacity.

Alas ! how little can a moment show

Of an eye where feeling plays

In ten thousand dewy rays; 130

A face o'er which a thousand shadows go !

—She stops—is fastened to that rivulet's  
side ;

And there (while, with sedater mien,

O'er timid waters that have scarcely left

Their birthplace in the rocky cleft 135

She bends) at leisure may be seen

Features to old ideal grace allied,

Amid their smiles and dimples dignified—

Fit countenance for the soul of primal truth;

The bland composure of eternal youth !

- What more changeful than the sea? 141  
 But over his great tides  
 Fidelity presides;  
 And this light-hearted Maiden constant  
 is as he.
- High is her aim as heaven above, 145  
 And wide as ether her good-will;  
 And, like the lowly reed, her love  
 Can drink its nurture from the scantiest  
 rill:
- Insight as keen as frosty star  
 Is to *her* charity no bar, 150  
 Nor interrupts her frolic graces  
 When she is, far from these wild places,  
 Encircled by familiar faces.
- O the charm that manners draw,  
 Nature, from thy genuine law! 155  
 If from what her hand would do,  
 Her voice would utter, aught ensue  
 Untoward or unfit;  
 She, in benign affections pure,  
 In self-forgetfulness secure, 160  
 Sheds round the transient harm or vague  
 mischance
- A light unknown to tutored elegance:  
 Hers is not a cheek shame-stricken,  
 But her blushes are joy-flushes;  
 And the fault (if fault it be) 165  
 Only ministers to quicken  
 Laughter-loving gaiety,  
 And kindle sportive wit—  
 Leaving this Daughter of the mountains  
 free,
- As if she knew that Oberon king of Faery  
 Had crossed her purpose with some quaint  
 vagary, 171  
 And heard his viewless bands  
 Over their mirthful triumph clapping  
 hands.
- “Last of the Three, though eldest born,  
 Reveal thyself, like pensive Morn 175  
 Touched by the skylark’s earliest note,  
 Ere humbler gladness be afloat.  
 But whether in the semblance drest  
 Of Dawn—or Eve, fair vision of the west,  
 Come with each anxious hope subdued  
 By woman’s gentle fortitude, 181  
 Each grief, through meekness, settling  
 into rest.
- Or I would hail thee when some high-  
 wrought page  
 Of a closed volume lingering in thy hand  
 Has raised thy spirit to a peaceful stand  
 Among the glories of a happier age.” 186
- Her brow hath opened on me—see it  
 there,  
 Brightening the umbrage of her hair;  
 So gleams the crescent moon, that loves  
 To be descried through shady groves. 190  
 Tenderest bloom is on her cheek;  
 Wish not for a richer streak;  
 Nor dread the depth of meditative eye;  
 But let thy love, upon that azure field  
 Of thoughtfulness and beauty, yield 195  
 Its homage offered up in purity.  
 What wouldst thou more? In sunny glade,  
 Or under leaves of thickest shade,  
 Was such a stillness e’er diffused  
 Since earth grew calm while angels  
 mused? 200  
 Softly she treads, as if her foot were loth  
 To crush the mountain dew-drops—soon  
 to melt
- On the flower’s breast; as if she felt  
 That flowers themselves, whate’er their  
 hue,  
 With all their fragrance, all their glisten-  
 ing, 205  
 Call to the heart for inward listening—  
 And though for bridal wreaths and tokens  
 true
- Welcomed wisely; though a growth  
 Which the careless shepherd sleeps on,  
 As fitly spring from turf the mourner  
 weeps on— 210  
 And without wrong are cropped the mar-  
 ble tomb to strew.
- The Charm is over; the mute Phantoms  
 gone,  
 Nor will return—but droop not, favoured  
 Youth;  
 The apparition that before thee shone  
 Obeyed a summons covetous of truth. 215  
 From these wild rocks thy footsteps I  
 will guide  
 To bowers in which thy fortune may be  
 tried,  
 And one of the bright Three become thy  
 happy Bride.

## XLI.

## THE WISHING-GATE.

[Composed 1828.—Published 1829 (*The Keepsake*);  
ed. 1832.]

In the vale of Grasmere, by the side of the old  
highway leading to Ambleside, is a gate, which,  
time out of mind, has been called the Wishing-  
gate, from a belief that wishes formed or in-  
dulged there have a favourable issue.

HOPE rules a land for ever green :  
All powers that serve the bright-eyed  
Queen

Are confident and gay ;  
Clouds at her bidding disappear ;  
Points she to aught?—the bliss draws near,  
And Fancy smooths the way. 6

Not such the land of Wishes—there  
Dwell fruitless day-dreams, lawless prayer,  
And thoughts with things at strife ;  
Yet how forlorn, should ye depart, 10  
Ye superstitions of the heart,  
How poor, were human life !

When magic lore abjured its might,  
Ye did not forfeit one dear right,  
One tender claim abate ; 15  
Witness this symbol of your sway,  
Surviving near the public way,  
The rustic Wishing-gate !

Enquire not if the faery race  
Shed kindly influence on the place, 20  
Ere northward they retired ;  
If here a warrior left a spell,  
Panting for glory as he fell ;  
Or here a saint expired.

Enough that all around is fair,  
Composed with Nature's finest care, 25  
And in her fondest love—  
Peace to embosom and content—  
To overawe the turbulent,  
The selfish to reprove. 30

Yea ! even the Stranger from afar,  
Reclining on this moss grown bar,  
Unknowing, and unknown,  
The infection of the ground partakes, 35  
Longing for his Beloved—who makes  
All happiness her own.

Then why should conscious Spirits fear  
The mystic stirrings that are here,  
The ancient faith disclaim ?  
The local Genius ne'er befriends 4:  
Desires whose course in folly ends,  
Whose just reward is shame.

Smile if thou wilt, but not in scorn,  
If some, by ceaseless pains outworn,  
Here crave an easier lot ; 4:  
If some have thirsted to renew  
A broken vow, or bind a true,  
With firmer, holier knot.

And not in vain, when thoughts are cast  
Upon the irrevocable past, 5:  
Some Penitent sincere  
May for a worthier future sigh,  
While trickles from his downcast eye  
No unavailing tear.

The Worldling, pining to be freed 5:  
From turmoil, who would turn or speed  
The current of his fate,  
Might stop before this favoured scene,  
At Nature's call, nor blush to lean  
Upon the Wishing-gate. 6

The Sage, who feels how blind, how weak  
Is man, though loth such help to seek,  
Yet, passing, here might pause,  
And thirst for insight to allay 6:  
Misgiving, while the crimson day  
In quietness withdraws ;

Or when the church-clock's knell profound  
To Time's first step across the bound  
Of midnight makes reply ;  
Time pressing on with starry crest 7:  
To filial sleep upon the breast  
Of dread eternity.

## XLII.

## THE WISHING-GATE DESTROYED.

[Composed ?.—Published 1842.]

'Tis gone—with old belief and dream  
That round it clung, and tempting schem:  
Released from fear and doubt ;  
And the bright landscape too must lie,  
By this blank wall, from every eye,  
Relentlessly shut out.

Bear witness ye who seldom passed  
That opening—but a look ye cast  
Upon the lake below,  
What spirit-stirring power it gained 10  
From faith which here was entertained,  
Though reason might say no.

Blest is that ground, where, o'er the springs  
Of history, Glory claps her wings,  
Fame sheds the exulting tear; 15  
Yet earth is wide, and many a nook  
Unheard of is, like this, a book  
For modest meanings dear.

It was in sooth a happy thought  
That grafted, on so fair a spot, 20  
So confident a token  
Of coming good;—the charm is fled;  
Indulgent centuries spun a thread,  
Which one harsh day has broken.

Alas! for him who gave the word; 25  
Could he no sympathy afford,  
Derived from earth or heaven,  
To hearts so oft by hope betrayed;  
Their very wishes wanted aid  
Which here was freely given? 30

Where, for the love-lorn maiden's wound,  
Will now so readily be found  
A balm of expectation?  
Anxious for far-off children, where  
Shall mothers breathe a like sweet air 35  
Of home-felt consolation?

And not unfelt will prove the loss  
'Mid trivial care and petty cross  
And each day's shallow grief;  
Though the most easily beguiled 40  
Were oft among the first that smiled  
At their own fond belief.

If still the reckless change we mourn,  
A reconciling thought may turn  
To harm that might lurk here, 45  
Ere judgment prompted from within  
Fit aims, with courage to begin,  
And strength to persevere.

Not Fortune's slave is Man: our state  
Enjoins, while firm resolves await 50  
On wishes just and wise,  
That strenuous action follow both,  
And life be one perpetual growth  
Of heaven-ward enterprise.

So taught, so trained, we boldly face 55  
All accidents of time and place;  
Whatever props may fail,  
Trust in that sovereign law can spread  
New glory o'er the mountain's head,  
Fresh beauty through the vale. 60  
That truth informing mind and heart,  
The simplest cottager may part,  
Ungrieved, with charm and spell;  
And yet, lost Wishing-gate, to thee  
The voice of grateful memory 65  
Shall bid a kind farewell!¹

## XLIII.

## THE PRIMROSE OF THE ROCK.

[Composed 1831.—Published 1835.]

A ROCK there is whose homely front  
The passing traveller slights;  
Yet there the glow-worm shang their lamps,  
Like stars, at various heights;  
And one coy Primrose to that Rock 5  
The vernal breeze invites.

What hideous warfare hath been waged,  
What kingdoms overthrown,  
Since first I spied that Primrose-tuft  
And marked it for my own; 10  
A lasting link in Nature's chain  
From highest heaven let down!

The flowers, still faithful to the stems,  
Their fellowship renew;  
The stems are faithful to the root, 15  
That worketh out of view;  
And to the rock the root adheres  
In every fibre true.

Close clings to earth the living rock,  
Though threatening still to fall; 20  
The earth is constant to her sphere;  
And God upholds them all:  
So blooms this lonely Plant, nor dreads  
Her annual funeral.

Here closed the meditative strain; 25  
But air breathed soft that day,  
The hoary mountain-heights were cheered,  
The sunry vale looked gay;  
And to the Primrose of the Rock  
I gave this after-lay. 30

¹ See Note, p. 901.

I sang—Let myriads of bright flowers,  
Like Thee, in field and grove  
Revive unenvied;—mightier far,  
Than tremblings that reprove  
Our vernal tendencies to hope, 35  
Is God's redeeming love;

That love which changed—for wan disease,  
For sorrow that had bent  
O'er hopeless dust, for withered age—  
Their moral element, 40  
And turned the thistles of a curse  
To types beneficent.

Sin-blighted though we are, we too,  
The reasoning Sons of Men,  
From one oblivious winter called  
Shall rise, and breathe again; 45  
And in eternal summer lose  
Our threescore years and ten.

To humbleness of heart descends  
This prescience from on high, 50  
The faith that elevates the just,  
Before and when they die;  
And makes each soul a separate heaven,  
A court for Deity.

## XLIV.

## PRESENTIMENTS.

[Composed 1830.—Published 1835.]

PRESENTIMENTS! they judge not right  
Who deem that ye from open light  
Retire in fear of shame;  
All *heaven-born* Instincts shun the touch  
Of vulgar sense,—and, being such, 5  
Such privilege ye claim.

The tear whose source I could not guess,  
The deep-sigh that seemed fatherless,  
Were mine in early days;  
And now, unforced by time to part 10  
With fancy, I obey my heart,  
And venture on your praise.

What though some busy foes to good,  
Too potent over nerve and blood,  
Lurk near you—and combine 15  
To taint the health which ye infuse;  
This hides not from the moral Muse  
Your origin divine.

How oft from you, derided Powers!  
Comes Faith that in auspicious hours 20  
Builds castles, not of air:  
Bodings unsanctioned by the will  
Flow from your visionary skill,  
And teach us to beware.

The bosom-weight, your stubborn gift, 25  
That no philosophy can lift,  
Shall vanish, if ye please,  
Like morning mist: and, where it lay,  
The spirits at your bidding play  
In gaiety and ease. 30

Star-guided contemplations move  
Through space, though calm, not raised  
above  
Prognostics that ye rule;  
The naked Indian of the wild, 35  
And haply too the cradled Child,  
Are pupils of your school.

But who can fathom your intents,  
Number their signs or instruments?  
A rainbow, a sunbeam,  
A subtle smell that Spring unbinds, 40  
Dead pause abrupt of midnight winds,  
An echo, or a dream.

The laughter of the Christmas hearth  
With sighs of self-exhausted mirth  
Ye feelingly reprove; 45  
And daily, in the conscious breast,  
Your visitations are a test  
And exercise of love.

When some great change gives boundless  
scope  
To an exulting Nation's hope 50  
Oft, startled and made wise  
By your low-breathed interpretations,  
The simply-meek foretaste the springs  
Of bitter contraries.

Ye daunt the proud array of war, 55  
Pervade the lonely ocean far  
As sail hath been unfurled;  
For dancers in the festive hall  
What ghastly partners hath your call  
Fetched from the shadowy world. 60

'Tis said that warnings ye dispense,  
Emboldened by a keener sense;

That men have lived for whom,  
With dread precision, ye made clear  
The hour that in a distant year  
Should knell them to the tomb. 65

Unwelcome insight! Yet there are  
Blest times when mystery is laid bare,  
Truth shows a glorious face,  
While on that isthmus which commands  
The councils of both worlds she stands,  
Sage Spirits! by your grace.

God, who instructs the brutes to scent  
All changes of the element,  
Whose wisdom fixed the scale 75  
Of natures, for our wants provides  
By higher, sometimes humbler, guides,  
When lights of reason fail.

## XLV.

## VERNAL ODE.

[Composed 1817.—Published 1820.]

"*Rerum Natura tota est nusquam magis quam  
in minimis.*" PLIN. *Nat. Hist.*

## I.

BENEATH the concave of an April sky,  
When all the fields with freshest green  
were dight,

Appeared, in presence of the spiritual eye  
That aids or supersedes our grosser sight,  
The form and rich habiliments of One 5  
Whose countenance bore resemblance to

the sun,

When it reveals, in evening majesty,  
Features half lost amid their own pure  
light.

Poised like a weary cloud, in middle air  
He hung,—then floated with angelic ease  
(Softening that bright effulgence by de-  
grees) 11

Till he had reached a summit sharp and  
bare,

Where oft the venturous heifer drinks the  
noontide breeze.

Upon the apex of that lofty cone  
Alighted, there the Stranger stood alone;  
Fair as a gorgeous Fabric of the east 16  
Suddenly raised by some enchanter's  
power,

Where nothing was; and firm as some old  
Tower  
Of Britain's realm, whose leafy crest  
Waves high, embellished by a gleaming  
shower! 20

## II.

Beneath the shadow of his purple wings  
Rested a golden harp;—he touched the  
strings;

And, after prelude of unearthly sound  
Poured through the echoing hills around,  
He sang—

"No wintry desolations, 25  
Scorching blight or noxious dew,  
Affect my native habitations;  
Buried in glory, far beyond the scope  
Of man's enquiring gaze, but to his hope  
Imaged, though faintly, in the hue 30  
Profound of night's ethereal blue;  
And in the aspect of each radiant orb;—  
Some fixed, some wandering with no  
timid curb;

But wandering star and fixed, to mortal  
eye,

Blended in absolute serenity, 35  
And free from semblance of decline;—  
Fresh as if Evening brought their natal  
hour,

Her darkness splendour gave, her silence  
power,

To testify of Love and Grace divine.

## III.

"What if those bright fires 40  
Shine subject to decay,  
Sons haply of extinguished sires,  
Themselves to lose their light, or pass  
away

Like clouds before the wind,  
Be thanks poured out to Him whose hand  
bestows, 45

Nightly, on human kind  
That vision of endurance and repose.

—And though to every draught of vital  
breath,

Renewed throughout the bounds of earth  
or ocean,

The melancholy gates of Death 50  
Respond with sympathetic motion;

Though all that feeds on nether air  
 Howe'er magnificent or fair,  
 Grows but to perish, and entrust  
 Its ruins to their kindred dust; 55  
 Yet, by the Almighty's ever-during care,  
 Her procreant vigils Nature keeps  
 Amid the unfathomable deeps;  
 And saves the peopled fields of earth  
 From dread of emptiness or dearth. 60  
 Thus, in their stations, lifting tow'rd the  
 sky  
 The foliaged head in cloud-like majesty,  
 The shadow-casting race of trees survive:  
 Thus, in the train of Spring, arrive  
 Sweet flowers;—what living eye hath  
 viewed 65  
 Their myriads?—endlessly renewed,  
 Wherever strikes the sun's glad ray;  
 Where'er the subtle waters stray;  
 Wherever sportive breezes bend  
 Their course, or genial showers descend!  
 Mortals, rejoice! the very Angels quit 71  
 Their mansions unsusceptible of change,  
 Amid your pleasant bowers to sit,  
 And through your sweet vicissitudes to  
 range!"

## IV.

O, nursed at happy distance from the  
 cares 75  
 Of a too-anxious world, mild pastoral  
 Muse!  
 That to the sparkling crown Urania  
 wears,  
 And to her sister Clio's laurel wreath,  
 Preferr'st a garland culled from purple  
 heath,  
 Or blooming thicket moist with morning  
 dews; 80  
 Was such bright Spectacle vouchsafed  
 to me?  
 And was it granted to the simple ear  
 Of thy contented Votary  
 Such melody to hear!  
 Him rather suits it, side by side with  
 thee, 85  
 Wrapped in a fit of pleasing indolence,  
 While thy tired lute hangs on the haw-  
 thorn-tree,  
 To lie and listen—till o'er-drows'd sense  
 Sinks, hardly conscious of the influence—

To the soft murmur of the vagrant Bee. 90  
 —A slender sound! yet hoary Time  
 Doth to the *Soul* exalt it with the chime  
 Of all his years;—a company  
 Of ages coming, ages gone;  
 (Nations from before them sweeping, 95  
 Regions in destruction steeping.)  
 But every awful note in unison  
 With that faint utterance, which tells  
 Of treasure sucked from buds and bells,  
 For the pure keeping of those waxen  
 cells; 100  
 Where She—a statist prudent to confer  
 Upon the common weal; a warrior bold,  
 Radiant all over with unburnished gold,  
 And armed with living spear for mortal  
 fight;  
 A cunning forager 105  
 That spreads no waste; a social builder;  
 one  
 In whom all busy offices unite  
 With all fine functions that afford de-  
 light—  
 Safe through the winter storm in quiet  
 dwells!

## V.

And is She brought within the power 110  
 Of vision?—o'er this tempting flower  
 Hovering until the petals stay  
 Her flight, and take its voice away!—  
 Observe each wing!—a tiny van!  
 The structure of her laden thigh, 115  
 How fragile! yet of ancestry  
 Mysteriously remote and high;  
 High as the imperial front of man;  
 The roseate bloom on woman's cheek;  
 The soaring eagle's curved beak; 120  
 The white plumes of the floating swan;  
 Old as the tiger's paw, the lion's mane  
 Ere shaken by that mood of stern disdain  
 At which the desert trembles.—Humming  
 Bee!  
 Thy sting was needless then, perchance  
 unknown, 125  
 The seeds of malice were not sown;  
 All creatures met in peace, from fierceness  
 free,  
 And no pride blended with their dignity.  
 —Tears had not broken from their source;  
 Nor Anguish strayed from her Tartarean  
 den; 130

The golden years maintained a course  
 Not undiversified though smooth and  
 even ;  
 We were not mocked with glimpse and  
 shadow then,  
 Bright Seraphs mixed familiarly with  
 men ;  
 And earth and stars composed a universal  
 heaven ! 135

## XLVI.

## DEVOTIONAL INCITEMENTS.

[Composed 1832.—Published 1835.]

“Not to the earth confined,  
 Ascend to heaven.”

WHERE will they stop, those breathing  
 Powers,  
 The Spirits of the new-born flowers ?  
 They wander with the breeze, they wind  
 Where'er the streams a passage find ;  
 Up from their native ground they rise 5  
 In mute aerial harmonies ;  
 From humble violet—modest thyme—  
 Exhaled, the essential odours climb,  
 As if no space below the sky  
 Their subtle flight could satisfy : 10  
 Heaven will not tax our thoughts with  
 pride  
 If like ambition be *their* guide.

Roused by this kindest of May-  
 showers,  
 The spirit-quickener of the flowers,  
 That with moist virtue softly cleaves 15  
 The buds, and freshens the young leaves,  
 The birds pour forth their souls in notes  
 Of rapture from a thousand throats—  
 Here checked by too impetuous haste,  
 While there the music runs to waste, 20  
 With bounty more and more enlarged,  
 Till the whole air is overcharged ;  
 Give ear, O Man ! to their appeal,  
 And thirst for no inferior zeal,  
 Thou, who canst *think*, as well as feel. 25

Mount from the earth ; aspire ! aspire !  
 So pleads the town's cathedral quire,  
 In strains that from their solemn height  
 Sink, to attain a loftier flight ;

While incense from the altar breathes 30  
 Rich fragrance in embodied wreaths ;  
 Or, flung from swinging censer, shrouds  
 The taper-lights, and curls in clouds  
 Around angelic Forms, the still  
 Creation of the painter's skill, 35  
 That on the service wait concealed  
 One moment, and the next revealed.  
 —Cast off your bonds, awake, arise,  
 And for no transient ecstasies !  
 What else can mean the visual plea 40  
 Of still or moving imagery—  
 The iterated summons loud,  
 Not wasted on the attendant crowd,  
 Nor wholly lost upon the throng  
 Hurrying the busy streets along ? 45

Alas ! the sanctities combined  
 By art to unsensualise the mind  
 Decay and languish ; or, as creeds  
 And humours change, are spurned like  
 weeds :  
 The priests are from their altars thrust ;  
 Temples are levelled with the dust ; 51  
 And solemn rites and awful forms  
 Founder amid fanatic storms.  
 Yet evermore, through years renewed  
 In undisturbed vicissitude 55  
 Of seasons balancing their flight  
 On the swift wings of day and night,  
 Kind Nature keeps a heavenly door  
 Wide open for the scattered Poor.  
 Where flower-breathed incense to the  
 skies 60  
 Is wafted in mute harmonies ;  
 And ground fresh-cloven by the plough  
 Is fragrant with a humbler vow ;  
 Where birds and brooks from leafy dells  
 Chime forth unwearied canticles, 65  
 And vapours magnify and spread  
 The glory of the sun's bright head—  
 Still constant in her worship, still  
 Conforming to the eternal Will,  
 Whether men sow or reap the fields, 70  
 Divine monition Nature yields,  
 That not by bread alone we live,  
 Or what a hand of flesh can give ;  
 That every day should leave some part  
 Free for a sabbath of the heart : 75  
 So shall the seventh be truly blest,  
 From morn to eve, with hallowed rest.

## XLVII.

## THE CUCKOO-CLOCK.

[Composed ?.—Published 1842.]

WOULDEST thou be taught, when sleep has  
taken flight,  
By a sure voice that can most sweetly tell,  
How far off yet a glimpse of morning  
light,

And if to lure the truant back be well,  
Forbear to covet a Repeater's stroke, 5  
That, answering to thy touch, will sound  
the hour;

Better provide thee with a Cuckoo-clock,  
For service hung behind thy chamber-  
door;

And in due time the soft spontaneous  
shock,

The double note, as if with living power,  
Will to composure lead—or make thee  
blithe as bird in bower. 11

List, Cuckoo—Cuckoo!—oft tho' tempests  
howl,

Or nipping frost remind thee trees are  
bare,

How cattle pine, and droop the shivering  
fowl,

Thy spirits will seem to feed on balmy air:  
I speak with knowledge,—by that Voice  
beguiled, 16

Thou wilt salute old memories as they  
throng

Into thy heart; and fancies, running wild  
Through fresh green fields, and budding  
groves among,

Will make thee happy, happy as a child;  
Of sunshine wilt thou think, and flowers,  
and song, 21

And breathe as in a world where nothing  
can go wrong.

And know—that, even for him who shuns  
the day

And nightly tosses on a bed of pain;  
Whose joys, from all but memory swept  
away, 25

Must come unhopèd for, if they come  
again;

Know—that, for him whose waking  
thoughts, severe

As his distress is sharp, would scorn my  
theme,

The mimic notes, striking upon his ear  
In sleep, and intermingling with his  
dream, 30

Could from sad regions send him to a dear  
Delightful land of verdure, shower and  
gleam,

To mock the *wandering* Voice beside some  
haunted stream.

O bounty without measure! while the  
grace

Of Heaven doth in such wise, from hum-  
blest springs, 35

Pour pleasure forth, and solaces that trace  
A mazy course along familiar things,

Well may our hearts have faith that  
blessings come,

Streaming from founts above the starry  
sky,

With angels when their own untroubled  
home 40

They leave, and speed on nightly embassy  
To visit earthly chambers,—and for  
whom?

Yea, both for souls who God's forbear-  
ance try,

And those that seek his help, and for his  
mercy sigh.

## XLVIII.

## TO THE CLOUDS.

[Composed ?.—Published 1842.]

ARMY of Clouds! ye wingèd Host in troops  
Ascending from behind the motionless  
brow

Of that tall rock, as from a hidden world,  
Oh whither with such eagerness of speed?

What seek ye, or what shun ye? of the gale  
Companions, fear ye to be left behind, 6

Or racing o'er your blue ethereal field  
Content ye with each other? of the sea

Children, thus post ye over vale and  
height

To sink upon your mother's lap—and  
rest? 10

Or were ye rightlier hailed, when first  
mine eyes

Beheld in your impetuous march the  
likeness

Of a wide army pressing on to meet  
 Or overtake some unknown enemy?—  
 But your smooth motions suit a peaceful  
     aim; 15  
 And Fancy, not less aptly pleased, compares  
 Your squadrons to an endless flight of  
     birds  
 Aerial, upon due migration bound  
 To milder climes; or rather do ye urge  
 In caravan your hasty pilgrimage 20  
 To pause at last on more aspiring heights  
 Than these, and utter your devotion there  
 With thunderous voice? Or are ye jubilant,  
 And would ye, tracking your proud lord  
     the Sun,  
 Be present at his setting; or the pomp 25  
 Of Persian mornings would ye fill, and stand  
 Poising your splendours high above the  
     heads  
 Of worshippers kneeling to their up-risen  
     God?  
 Whence, whence, ye Clouds! this eagerness  
     of speed?  
 Speak, silent creatures.—They are gone,  
     are fled, 30  
 Buried together in yon gloomy mass  
 That loads the middle heaven; and clear  
     and bright  
 And vacant doth the region which they  
     thronged  
 Appear; a calm descent of sky conducting  
 Down to the unapproachable abyss, 35  
 Down to that hidden gulf from which  
     they rose  
 To vanish—fleet as days and months and  
     years,  
 Fleet as the generations of mankind,  
 Power, glory, empire, as the world itself,  
 The lingering world, when time hath  
     ceased to be. 40  
 But the winds roar, shaking the rooted  
     trees,  
 And see! a bright precursor to a train  
 Perchance as numerous, overpeers the rock  
 That sullenly refuses to partake  
 Of the wild impulse. From a fount of  
     life 45  
 Invisible, the long procession moves

Luminous or gloomy, welcome to the vale  
 Which they are entering, welcome to  
     mine eye  
 That sees them, to my soul that owns in  
     them,  
 And in the bosom of the firmament 50  
 O'er which they move, wherein they are  
     contained,  
 A type of her capacious self and all  
 Her restless progeny.

A humble walk

Here is my body doomed to tread, this  
     path,  
 A little hoary line and faintly traced, 55  
 Work, shall we call it, of the shepherd's  
     foot  
 Or of his flock?—joint vestige of them  
     both.  
 I pace it unrepining, for my thoughts  
 Admit no bondage and my words have  
     wings.  
 Where is the Orphean lyre, or Druid  
     harp, 60  
 To accompany the verse? The mountain  
     blast  
 Shall be our *hand* of music; he shall  
     sweep  
 The rocks, and quivering trees, and billow-  
     low lake,  
 And search the fibres of the caves, and  
     they  
 Shall answer, for our song is of the  
     Clouds, 65  
 And the wind loves them; and the gentle  
     gales—  
 Which by their aid re-clothe the naked  
     lawn  
 With annual verdure, and revive the  
     woods,  
 And moisten the parched lips of thirsty  
     flowers—  
 Love them; and every idle breeze of air  
 Bends to the favourite burthen. Moon  
     and stars 71  
 Keep their most solemn vigils when the  
     Clouds  
 Watch also, shifting peaceably their place  
 Like bands of ministering Spirits, or  
     when they lie,  
 As if some Protean art the change had  
     wrought, 75

In listless quiet o'er the ethereal deep  
 Scattered, a Cyclades of various shapes  
 And all degrees of beauty. O ye Light-  
   nings!  
 Ye are their perilous offspring; and the  
   Sun—  
 Source inexhaustible of life and joy, 80  
 And type of man's far-darting reason,  
   therefore  
 In old time worshipped as the god of verse,  
 A blazing intellectual deity—  
 Loves his own glory in their looks, and  
   showers  
 Upon that unsubstantial brotherhood 85  
 Visions with all but beatific light  
 Enriched—too transient, were they not  
   renewed  
 From age to age, and did not, while we  
   gaze  
 In silent rapture, credulous desire  
 Nourish the hope that memory lacks not  
   power 90  
 To keep the treasure unimpaired. Vain  
   thought!  
 Yet why repine, created as we are  
 For joy and rest, albeit to find them only  
 Lodged in the bosom of eternal things?

## XLIX.

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF  
THE BIRD OF PARADISE.

[Composed ?.—Published 1842.]

THE gentlest Poet, with free thoughts  
 endowed,  
 And a true master of the glowing strain,  
 Might scan the narrow province with  
   disdain  
 That to the Painter's skill is here allowed.  
 This, this the Bird of Paradise! disclaim  
 The daring thought, forget the name; 6  
 This the Sun's Bird, whom Glendoveers  
   might own  
 As no unworthy Partner in their flight  
 Through seas of ether, where the ruffling  
   sway  
 Of nether air's rude billows is unknown;  
 Whom Sylphs, if e'er for casual pastime  
   they 11  
 Through India's spicy regions wing their  
   way,

Might bow to as their Lord. What  
 character,  
 O sovereign Nature! I appeal to thee,  
 Of all thy feathered progeny 15,  
 Is so unearthly, and what shape so fair?  
 So richly decked in variegated down,  
 Green, sable, shining yellow, shadowy  
   brown,  
 Tints softly with each other blended,  
 Hues doubtfully begun and ended; 20  
 Or intershooting, and to sight  
 Lost and recovered, as the rays of light  
 Glance on the conscious plumes touched  
   here and there?  
 Full surely, when with such proud gifts  
   of life  
 Began the pencil's strife, 25  
 O'erweening Art was caught as in a snare.

A sense of seemingly presumptuous  
 wrong  
 Gave the first impulse to the Poet's song;  
 But, of his scorn repenting soon, he drew  
 A juster judgment from a calmer view; 30  
 And, with a spirit freed from discontent,  
 Thankfully took an effort that was meant  
 Not with God's bounty, Nature's love,  
   to vie,  
 Or made with hope to please that inward  
   eye 34  
 Which ever strives in vain itself to satisfy,  
 But to recall the truth by some faint trace  
 Of power ethereal and celestial grace,  
 That in the living Creature find on earth  
   a place.

## L.

## A JEWISH FAMILY.

(IN A SMALL VALLEY OPPOSITE ST. GOAR,  
UPON THE RHINE.)

[Composed 1828.—Published 1835.]

GENIUS of Raphael! if thy wings  
 Might bear thee to this glen,  
 With faithful memory left of things  
 To pencil dear and pen,  
 Thou wouldst forego the neighbouring  
   Rhine, 5  
 And all his majesty—  
 A studious forehead to incline  
 O'er this poor family.

The Mother—her thou must have seen,  
 In spirit, ere she came 10  
 To dwell these rifted rocks between,  
 Or found on earth a name;  
 An image, too, of that sweet Boy,  
 Thy inspirations give—  
 Of playfulness, and love, and joy, 15  
 Predestined here to live.  
 Downcast, or shooting glances far,  
 How beautiful his eyes,  
 That blend the nature of the star  
 With that of summer skies! 20  
 I speak as if of sense beguiled;  
 Uncounted months are gone,  
 Yet am I with the Jewish Child,  
 That exquisite Saint John.  
 I see the dark-brown curls, the brow, 25  
 The smooth transparent skin,  
 Refined, as with intent to show  
 The holiness within;  
 The grace of parting Infancy  
 By blushes yet untamed; 30  
 Age faithful to the mother's knee,  
 Nor of her arms ashamed.  
 Two lovely Sisters, still and sweet  
 As flowers, stand side by side;  
 Their soul-subduing looks might cheat 35  
 The Christian of his pride:  
 Such beauty hath the Eternal poured  
 Upon them not forlorn,  
 Though of a lineage once abhorred,  
 Nor yet redeemed from scorn. 40  
 Mysterious safeguard, that, in spite  
 Of poverty and wrong,  
 Doth here preserve a living light,  
 From Hebrew fountains sprung;  
 That gives this ragged group to cast 45  
 Around the dell a gleam  
 Of Palestine, of glory past,  
 And proud Jerusalem!

### LI.

#### ON THE POWER OF SOUND.

[Composed 1828.—Published 1835.]

#### ARGUMENT.

The Ear addressed, as occupied by a spiritual  
 functionary, in communion with sounds, indi-  
 vidual, or combined in studied harmony.—  
 Sources and effects of those sounds (to the

close of 6th Stanza).—The power of music,  
 whence proceeding, exemplified in the idiot.—  
 Origin of music, and its effect in early ages—  
 how produced (to the middle of 10th Stanza).—  
 The mind recalled to sounds acting casually  
 and severally.—Wish uttered (11th Stanza) that  
 these could be united into a scheme or system  
 for moral interests and intellectual contempla-  
 tion.—(Stanza 12th).—The Pythagorean theory  
 of numbers and music, with their supposed  
 power over the motions of the universe—ima-  
 ginations consonant with such a theory.—Wish  
 expressed (in 11th Stanza) realized, in some  
 degree, by the representation of all sounds  
 under the form of thanksgiving to the Creator.  
 —(Last Stanza) the destruction of earth and  
 the planetary system—the survival of audible  
 harmony, and its support in the Divine Nature,  
 as revealed in Holy Writ.

### I.

Thy functions are ethereal,  
 As if within thee dwelt a glancing mind,  
 Organ of vision! And a Spirit ærial  
 Informs the cell of Hearing, dark and blind;  
 Intricate labyrinth, more dread for thought  
 To enter than oracular cave; 6  
 Strict passage, through which sighs are  
 brought,  
 And whispers for the heart, their slave;  
 And shrieks, that revel in abuse  
 Of shivering flesh; and warbled air, 10  
 Whose piercing sweetness can unloose  
 The chains of frenzy, or entice a smile  
 Into the ambush of despair;  
 Hosannas pealing down the long-drawn  
 aisle,  
 And requiems answered by the pulse that  
 beats 15  
 Devoutly, in life's last retreats!

### II.

The headlong streams and fountains  
 Serve Thee, invisible Spirit, with untired  
 powers;  
 Cheering the wakeful tent on Syrian  
 mountains,  
 They lull perchance ten thousand thou-  
 sand flowers. 20  
 That roar, the prowling lion's *Here I am*,  
 How fearful to the desert wide!  
 That bleat, how tender! of the dam  
 Calling a straggler to her side.

Shout, cuckoo!—let the vernal soul 25  
Go with thee to the frozen zone;  
Toll from thy loftiest perch, lone bell-  
bird, toll!

At the still hour to Mercy dear,  
Mercy from her twilight throne  
Listening to nun's faint throb of holy  
fear, 30

To sailor's prayer breathed from a darken-  
ing sea,  
Or widow's cottage-lullaby.

## III.

Ye Voices, and ye Shadows  
And Images of voice—to hound and horn  
From rocky steep and rock-bestudded  
meadows 35

Flung back, and, in the sky's blue caves,  
reborn—

On with your pastime! till the church-  
tower bells

A greeting give of measured glee;  
And milder echoes from their cells  
Repeat the bridal symphony. 40

Then, or far earlier, let us rove  
Where mists are breaking up or gone,  
And from aloft look down into a cove  
Besprinkled with a careless quire,

Happy milk-maids, one by one 45  
Scattering a ditty each to her desire,  
A liquid concert matchless by nice Art,  
A stream as if from one full heart.

## IV.

Blest be the song that brightens  
The blind man's gloom, exalts the veter-  
an's mirth; 50

Unscorned the peasant's whistling breath,  
that lightens

His duteous toil of furrowing the green  
earth.

For the tired slave, Song lifts the languid  
oar,

And bids it aptly fall, with chime  
That beautifies the fairest shore, 55

And mitigates the harshest clime.  
Yon pilgrims see—in lagging file

They move; but soon the appointed way  
A choral *Ave Marie* shall beguile,

And to their hope the distant shrine 60

Glisten with a livelier ray:  
Nor friendless he, the prisoner of the  
mine,  
Who from the well-spring of his own  
clear breast  
Can draw, and sing his griefs to rest.

## V.

When civic renovation 65  
Dawns on a kingdom, and for needful  
haste

Best eloquence avails not, Inspiration  
Mounts with a tune, that travels like a  
blast

Piping through cave and battlemented  
tower;

Then starts the sluggard, pleased to meet  
That voice of Freedom, in its power 71

Of promises, shrill, wild, and sweet!  
Who, from a martial *pageant*, spreads

Incitements of a battle-day,  
Thrilling the unweaponed crowd with  
plumeless heads?— 75

Even She whose Lydian airs inspire  
Peaceful striving, gentle play

Of timid hope and innocent desire  
Shot from the dancing Graces, as they  
move

Fanned by the plausive wings of Love. 80

## VI.

How oft along thy mazes,  
Regent of sound, have dangerous Passions  
trod!

O Thou, through whom the temple rings  
with praises,

And blackening clouds in thunder speak  
of God,

Betray not by the cozenage of sense 85  
Thy votaries, wooingly resigned

To a voluptuous influence  
That taints the purer, better, mind;

But lead sick Fancy to a harp  
That hath in noble tasks been tried; 90

And, if the virtuous feel a pang too sharp,  
Soothe it into patience—stay

The uplifted arm of Suicide;  
And let some mood of thine in firm array

Knit every thought the impeding issue  
needs, 95

Ere martyr burns, or patriot bleeds!

## VII.

As Conscience, to the centre  
 Of being, smites with irresistible pain,  
 So shall a solemn cadence, if it enter  
 The mouldy vaults of the dull idiot's  
     brain, 100  
 Transmute him to a wretch from quiet  
     hurled—  
 Convulsed as by a jarring din;  
 And then aghast, as at the world  
 Of reason partially let in  
 By concords winding with a sway 105  
 Terrible for sense and soul!  
 Or awed he weeps, struggling to quell  
     dismay.  
 Point not these mysteries to an Art  
 Lodged above the starry pole;  
 Pure modulations flowing from the heart  
 Of divine Love, where Wisdom, Beauty,  
     Truth 111  
 With Order dwell, in endless youth?

## VIII.

Oblivion may not cover  
 All treasures hoarded by the miser, Time.  
 Orphean Insight! truth's undaunted  
     lover, 115  
 To the first leagues of tutored passion  
     climb,  
 When Music deigned within this grosser  
     sphere  
 Her subtle essence to enfold,  
 And voice and shell drew forth a tear  
 Softer than Nature's self could mould. 120  
 Yet *strenuous* was the infant Age:  
 Art, daring because souls could feel,  
 Stirred nowhere but an urgent equipage  
 Of rapt imagination sped her march  
 Through the realms of woe and weal: 125  
 Hail to the lyre bowed low; the upper  
     arch  
 Rejoiced that clamorous spell and magic  
     verse  
 Her wan disasters could disperse.

## IX.

The GIFT to king Amphien  
 That walled a city with its melody 130  
 Was for belief no dream:—thy skill,  
     Arion!

Could humanize the creatures of the sea,  
 Where men were monsters. A last grace  
     he craves,  
 Leave for one chant;—the dulcet sound  
 Steals from the deck o'er willing waves,  
 And listening dolphins gather round. 136  
 Self-cast, as with a desperate course,  
 'Mid that strange audience, he bestrides  
 A proud One docile as a managed horse;  
 And singing, while the accordant hand  
 Sweeps his harp, the Master rides; 141  
 So shall he touch at length a friendly  
     strand,  
 And he, with his preserver, shine star-  
     bright  
 In memory, through silent night.

## X.

The pipe of Pan, to shepherds 145  
 Couched in the shadow of Mænalian  
     pines,  
 Was passing sweet; the eyeballs of the  
     leopards,  
 That in high triumph drew the Lord of  
     vines,  
 How did they sparkle to the cymbal's  
     clang!  
 While Fauns and Satyrs beat the ground  
 In cadence,—and Silenus swang 151  
 This way and that, with wild-flowers  
     crowned.  
 To life, to *life* give back thine ear:  
 Ye who are longing to be rid  
 Of fable, though to truth subservient,  
     hear 155  
 The little sprinkling of cold earth that fell  
 Echoed from the coffin-lid;  
 The convict's summons in the steeple's  
     knell;  
 "The vain distress-gun," from a leeward  
     shore,  
 Repeated—heard, and heard no more! 160

## XI.

For terror, joy, or pity,  
 Vast is the compass and the swell of  
     notes:  
 From the babe's first cry to voice of regal  
     city,  
 Rolling a solemn sea-like bass, that floats

Far as the woodlands—with the trill to  
blend 165  
Of that shy songstress, whose love-tale  
Might tempt an angel to descend,  
While hovering o'er the moonlight vale.  
Ye wandering Utterances, has earth no  
scheme,  
No scale of moral music—to unite 170  
Powers that survive but in the faintest  
dream  
Of memory?—O that yemight stoop to bear  
Chains, such precious chains of sight  
As laboured minstrelsies through ages  
wear!  
O for a balance fit the truth to tell 175  
Of the Unsubstantial, pondered well!

## XII.

By one pervading spirit  
Of tones and numbers all things are con-  
trolled,  
As sages taught, where faith was found  
to merit  
Initiation in that mystery old. 180  
The heavens, whose aspect makes our  
minds as still  
As they themselves appear to be,  
Innumerable voices fill  
With everlasting harmony;  
The towering headlands, crowned with  
mist, 185  
Their feet among the billows, know  
That Ocean is a mighty harmonist;  
Thy pinions, universal Air,  
Ever waving to and fro,  
Are delegates of harmony, and bear 190  
Strains that support the Seasons in their  
round;  
Stern Winter loves a dirge-like sound.

## XIII.

Break forth into thanksgiving,  
Ye banded instruments of wind and  
chords;

Unite, to magnify the Ever-living, 195  
Your inarticulate notes with the voice of  
words!  
Nor hushed be service from the lowing  
mead,  
Nor mute the forest hum of noon;  
Thou too be heard, lone eagle! freed  
From snowy peak and cloud, attune 200  
Thy hungry barkings to the hymn  
Of joy, that from her utmost walls  
The six-days' Work by flaming Sera-  
phim  
Transmits to Heaven! As Deep to Deep  
Shouting through one valley calls, 205  
All worlds, all natures, mood and mea-  
sure keep  
For praise and ceaseless gratulation,  
poured  
Into the ear of God, their Lord!

## XIV.

A Voice to Light gave Being;  
To Time, and Man his earth-born chro-  
nicler; 210  
A Voice shall finish doubt and dim fore-  
seeing,  
And sweep away life's visionary stir;  
The trumpet (we, intoxicate with pride,  
Arm at its blast for deadly wars)  
To archangelic lips applied, 215  
The grave shall open, quench the stars.  
O Silence! are Man's noisy years  
No more than moments of thy life?  
Is Harmony, blest queen of smiles and  
tears,  
With her smooth tones and discords just,  
Tempered into rapturous strife, 221  
Thy destined bond-slave? No! though  
earth be dust  
And vanish, though the heavens dissolve,  
her stay  
Is in the WORD, that shall not pass  
away.

# Peter Bell,

A T A L E.

[Composed 1798.—Published 1819.]

“What’s in a Name?”

“Brutus will start a Spirit as soon as Cæsar!”

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, Esq., P.L.,  
ETC., ETC.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

The Tale of Peter Bell, which I now introduce to your notice, and to that of the Public, has, in its Manuscript state, nearly survived its *minority*:—for it first saw the light in the summer of 1798. During this long interval, pains have been taken at different times to make the production less unworthy of a favourable reception; or rather to fit it for filling *permanently* a station, however humble, in the Literature of our Country. This has, indeed, been the aim of all my endeavours in Poetry, which, you know, have been sufficiently laborious to prove that I deem the Art not lightly to be approached; and that the attainment of excellence in it may laudably be made the principal object of intellectual pursuit by any man, who, with reasonable consideration of circumstances, has faith in his own impulses.

The Poem of Peter Bell, as the Prologue will show, was composed under a belief that the Imagination not only does not require for its exercise the intervention of supernatural agency, but that, though such agency be excluded, the faculty may be called forth as imperiously, and for kindred results of pleasure, by incidents within the compass of poetic probability, in the humblest departments of daily life. Since that Prologue was written, *you* have exhibited most splendid effects of judicious daring in the opposite and usual course. Let this acknowledgment make my peace with the lovers of the supernatural; and I am persuaded it will be admitted that to you, as a Master in that province of the art, the following Tale, whether from contrast or congruity, is not an inappropriate offering. Accept it, then, as a public testimony of affectionate admiration from one with whose name yours has been often coupled (to use your own words) for evil and for good; and believe me to be, with earnest wishes that life and health may be granted you to complete the many important works in which you are engaged, and with high respect,

Most faithfully yours,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT,

April 7, 1819.

## PROLOGUE.

THERE’S something in a flying horse,  
There’s something in a huge balloon;  
But through the clouds I’ll never float  
Until I have a little Boat,  
Shaped like the crescent-moon. 5

And now I have a little Boat,  
In shape a very crescent-moon:  
Fast through the clouds my Boat can sail;  
But if perchance your faith should fail,  
Look up—and you shall see me soon! 10

The woods, my Friends, are round you  
roaring,

Rocking and roaring like a sea;  
The noise of danger’s in your ears,  
And ye have all a thousand fears  
Both for my little Boat and me! 15

Meanwhile untroubled I admire  
The pointed horns of my canoe;  
And, did not pity touch my breast  
To see how ye are all distrest,  
Till my ribs ached I’d laugh at you! 20

Away we go, my Boat and I—  
Frail man ne’er sate in such another;  
Whether among the winds we strive,  
Or deep into the clouds we dive,  
Each is contented with the other. 25

Away we go—and what care we  
For treasons, tumults, and for wars?  
We are as calm in our delight  
As is the crescent-moon so bright  
Among the scattered stars. 30

Up goes my Boat among the stars  
Through many a breathless field of light,  
Through many a long blue field of ether,  
Leaving ten thousand stars beneath her:  
Up goes my little Boat so bright! 35

The Crab, the Scorpion, and the Bull—  
We pry among them all; have shot

High o'er the red-haired race of Mars,  
Covered from top to toe with scars;  
Such company I like it not! 40

The towns in Saturn are decayed,  
And melancholy Spectres throng them;—  
The Pleiads, that appear to kiss  
Each other in the vast abyss,  
With joy I sail among them. 45

Swift Mercury resounds with mirth,  
Great Jove is full of stately bowers;  
But these, and all that they contain,  
What are they to that tiny grain,  
That little Earth of ours? 50

Then back to Earth, the deargreen Earth:—  
Whole ages if I here should roam,  
The world for my remarks and me  
Would not a whit the better be;  
I've left my heart at home. 55

See! there she is, the matchless Earth!  
There spreads the famed Pacific Ocean!  
Old Andes thrusts yon craggy spear  
Through the grey clouds; the Alps are here,  
Like waters in commotion! 60

Yon tawny slip is Libya's sands;  
That silver thread the river Dnieper;  
And look, where clothed in brightest green  
Is a sweet Isle, of isles the Queen;  
Ye fairies, from all evil keep her! 65

And see the town where I was born!  
Around those happy fields we span  
In boyish gambols;—I was lost  
Where I have been, but on this coast  
I feel I am a man. 70

Never did fifty things at once  
Appear so lovely, never, never;—  
How tunelessly the forests ring!  
To hear the earth's soft murmuring  
Thus could I hang for ever! 75

"Shame on you!" cried my little Boat,  
"Was ever such a homesick Loon,  
Within a living Boat to sit,  
And make no better use of it;  
A Boat twin-sister of the crescent-moon!"

"Ne'er in the breast of full-grown Poet  
Fluttered so faint a heart before;—  
Was it the music of the spheres  
That overpowered your mortal ears?  
—Such din shall trouble them no more. 85

"These nether precincts do not lack  
Charms of their own;—then come with  
me,

I want a comrade, and for you  
There's nothing that I would not do;  
Nought is there that you shall not see. 90

"Haste! and above Siberian snows  
We'll sport amid the boreal morning;  
Will mingle with her lustres gliding  
Among the stars, the stars now hiding,  
And now the stars adorning. 95

"I know the secrets of a land  
Where human foot did never stray;  
Fair is that land as evening skies,  
And cool, though in the depth it lies  
Of burning Africa. 100

"Or we'll into the realm of Faery,  
Among the lovely shades of things;  
The shadowy forms of mountains bare,  
And streams, and bowers, and ladies fair,  
The shades of palaces and kings! 105

"Or, if you thirst with hardy zeal  
Less quiet regions to explore,  
Prompt voyage shall to you reveal  
How earth and heaven are taught to feel  
The might of magic lore!" 110

"My little vagrant Form of light,  
My gay and beautiful Canoe,  
Well have you played your friendly part;  
As kindly take what from my heart  
Experience forces—then adieu! 115

"Temptation lurks among your words;  
But, while these pleasures you're pur-  
suing  
Without impediment or let,  
No wonder if you quite forget  
What on the earth is doing. 120

"There was a time when all mankind  
Did listen with a faith sincere  
To tuneful tongues in mystery versed;  
Then Poets fearlessly rehearsed  
The wonders of a wild career. 125

"Go—(but the world's a sleepy world,  
And 'tis, I fear, an age too late)  
Take with you some ambitious Youth!  
For, restless Wanderer! I, in truth,  
Am all unfit to be your mate. 130

"Long have I loved what I behold,  
The night that calms, the day that cheers;  
The common growth of mother-earth  
Suffices me—her tears, her mirth,  
Her humblest mirth and tears. 135

"The dragon's wing, the magic ring,  
I shall not covet for my dower,  
If I along that lowly way  
With sympathetic heart may stray,  
And with a soul of power. 140

"These given, what more need I desire  
To stir, to soothe, or elevate?  
What nobler marvels than the mind  
May in life's daily prospect find,  
May find or there create? 145

"A potent wand doth Sorrow wield;  
What spell so strong as guilty Fear!  
Repentance is a tender Sprite;  
If aught on earth have heavenly might,  
'Tis lodged within her silent tear. 150

"But grant my wishes,—let us now  
Descend from this ethereal height;  
Then take thy way, adventurous Skiff,  
More daring far than Hippogriff,  
And be thy own delight! 155

"To the stone-table in my garden,  
Loved haunt of many a summer hour,  
The Squire is come: his daughter Bess  
Beside him in the cool recess  
Sits blooming like a flower. 160

"With these are many more convened;  
They know not I have been so far;—  
I see them there, in number nine,  
Beneath the spreading Weymouth-pine!  
I see them—there they are! 165

"There sits the Vicar and his Dame;  
And there my good friend, Stephen Otter;  
And, ere the light of evening fail,  
To them I must relate the Tale  
Of Peter Bell the Potter." 170

Off flew the Boat—away she flees,  
Spurning her freight with indignation!  
And I, as well as I was able,  
On two poor legs, toward my stone-table  
Limped on with sore vexation. 175

"O, here he is!" cried little Bess—  
She saw me at the garden-door;  
"We've waited anxiously and long,"  
They cried, and all around me throng,  
Full nine of them or more! 180

"Reproach me not—your fears be still—  
Be thankful we again have met;—  
Resume, my Friends! within the shade  
Your seats, and quickly shall be paid  
The well-remembered debt." 185

I spake with faltering voice, like one  
Not wholly rescued from the pale  
Of a wild dream, or worse illusion;  
But straight, to cover my confusion,  
Began the promised Tale: 190

#### PART FIRST.

ALL by the moonlight river-side  
Groaned the poor Beast—alas! in vain;  
The staff was raised to loftier height,  
And the blows fell with heavier weight  
As Peter struck—and struck again. 195

"Hold!" cried the Squire, "against the  
rules  
Of common sense you're surely sinning;  
This leap is for us all too bold;  
Who Peter was, let that be told,  
And start from the beginning." 200

—"A Potter,<sup>1</sup> Sir, he was by trade,"  
Said I, becoming quite collected;  
"And wheresoever he appeared,  
Full twenty times was Peter feared  
For once that Peter was respected. 205

"He, two-and-thirty years or more,  
Had been a wild and woodland rover;  
Had heard the Atlantic surges roar  
On farthest Cornwall's rocky shore,  
And trod the cliffs of Dover. 210

"And he had seen Caernarvon's towers,  
And well he knew the spire of Sarum;  
And he had been where Lincoln bell  
Flings o'er the fen that ponderous knell—  
A far-renowned alarum! 215

<sup>1</sup> In the dialect of the North, a hawker of earthenware is thus designated.

"At Doncaster, at York, and Leeds,  
And merry Carlisle had he been ;  
And all along the Lowlands fair,  
All through the bonny shire of Ayr ;  
And far as Aberdeen.

220

"And he had been at Inverness ;  
And Peter, by the mountain-rills,  
Had danced his round with Highland  
lasses ;

And he had lain beside his asses  
On lofty Cheviot Hills :

225

"And he had trudged through Yorkshire  
dales,

Among the rocks and winding *scars* ;  
Where deep and low the hamlets lie  
Beneath their little patch of sky  
And little lot of stars :

230

"And all along the indented coast,  
Bespattered with the salt-sea foam ;  
Where'er a knot of houses lay  
On headland, or in hollow bay ;—  
Sure never man like him did roam !

235

"As well might Peter in the Fleet  
Have been fast bound, a begging debtor ;—  
He travelled here, he travelled there ;—  
But not the value of a hair  
Was heart or head the better.

240

"He roved among the vales and streams,  
In the green wood and hollow dell ;  
They were his dwellings night and day,—  
But nature ne'er could find the way  
Into the heart of Peter Bell.

245

"In rain, through every changeful year,  
Did Nature lead him as before ;  
A primrose by a river's brim  
A yellow primrose was to him,  
And it was nothing more.

250

"Small change it made in Peter's heart  
To see his gentle panniered train  
With more than vernal pleasure feeding,  
Where'er the tender grass was leading  
Its earliest green along the lane.

255

"In rain, through water, earth, and air,  
The soul of happy sound was spread,  
When Peter on some April morn,  
Beneath the broom or budding thorn,  
Made the warm earth his lazy bed.

260

"At noon, when, by the forest's edge  
He lay beneath the branches high,  
The soft blue sky did never melt  
Into his heart ; he never felt  
The witchery of the soft blue sky !

265

"On a fair prospect some have looked  
And felt, as I have heard them say,  
As if the moving time had been  
A thing as steadfast as the scene  
On which they gazed themselves away.

271

"Within the breast of Peter Bell  
These silent raptures found no place ;  
He was a Carl as wild and rude  
As ever hue-and-cry pursued,  
As ever ran a felon's race.

275

"Of all that lead a lawless life,  
Of all that love their lawless lives,  
In city or in village small,  
He was the wildest far of all ;—  
He had a dozen wedded wives.

280

"Nay, start not !—wedded wives—and  
twelve !

But how one wife could e'er come near him,  
In simple truth I cannot tell ;  
For, be it said of Peter Bell,  
To see him was to fear him.

285

"Though Nature could not touch his heart  
By lovely forms, and silent weather,  
And tender sounds, yet you might see  
At once that Peter Bell and she  
Had often been together.

290

"A savage wildness round him hung  
As of a dweller out of doors ;  
In his whole figure and his mien  
A savage character was seen  
Of mountains and of dreary moors.

295

"To all the unshaped half-human thoughts  
Which solitary Nature feeds  
'Mid summer storms or winter's ice,  
Had Peter joined whatever vice  
The cruel city breeds.

300

"His face was keen as is the wind  
That cuts along the hawthorn-fence ;  
Of courage you saw little there,  
But, in its stead, a medley air  
Of cunning and of impudence.

305

"He had a dark and sidelong walk,  
And long and slouching was his gait;  
Beneath his looks so bare and bold,  
You might perceive, his spirit cold  
Was playing with some inward bait. 310

"His forehead wrinkled was and furred;  
A work, one half of which was done  
By thinking of his 'whens' and 'hows,'  
And half, by knitting of his brows  
Beneath the glaring sun. 315

"There was a hardness in his cheek,  
There was a hardness in his eye,  
As if the man had fixed his face,  
In many a solitary place,  
Against the wind and open sky!" 320

ONE NIGHT, (and now, my little Bess!  
We've reached at last the promised Tale;)  
One beautiful November night,  
When the full moon was shining bright  
Upon the rapid river Swale, 325

Along the river's winding banks  
Peter was travelling all alone;—  
Whether to buy or sell, or led  
By pleasure running in his head,  
To me was never known. 330

He trudged along through copse and  
brake  
He trudged along o'er hill and dale;  
Nor for the moon cared he a tittle,  
And for the stars he cared as little,  
And for the murmuring river Swale. 335

But, chancing to espy a path  
That promised to cut short the way;  
As many a wiser man hath done,  
He left a trusty guide for one  
That might his steps betray. 340

To a thick wood he soon is brought  
Where cheerily his course he weaves,  
And whistling loud may yet be heard,  
Though often buried like a bird  
Darkling, among the boughs and leaves.

But quickly Peter's mood is changed, 346  
And on he drives with cheeks that burn  
In downright fury and in wrath;—  
There's little sign the treacherous path  
Will to the road return! 350

The path grows dim, and dimmer still;  
Now up, now down, the Rover wends,  
With all the sail that he can carry,  
Till brought to a deserted quarry—  
And there the pathway ends. 355

He paused—for shadows of strange shape,  
Massy and black, before him lay;  
But through the dark, and through the  
cold,  
And through the yawning fissures old,  
Did Peter boldly press his way 360

Right through the quarry;—and behold  
A scene of soft and lovely hue!  
Where blue and grey, and tender green,  
Together make as sweet a scene  
As ever human eye did view. 365

Beneath the clear blue sky he saw  
A little field of meadow ground;  
But field or meadow name it not;  
Call it of earth a small green plot,  
With rocks encompassed round. 370

The Swale flowed under the grey rocks,  
But he flowed quiet and unseen:—  
You need a strong and stormy gale  
To bring the noises of the Swale  
To that green spot, so calm and green!

And is there no one dwelling here, 376  
No hermit with his beads and glass?  
And does no little cottage look  
Upon this soft and fertile nook?  
Does no one live near this green grass?

Across the deep and quiet spot 381  
Is Peter driving through the grass—  
And now has reached the skirting trees;  
When, turning round his head, he sees  
A solitary Ass. 385

"A prize!" cries Peter—but he first  
Must spy about him far and near:  
There's not a single house in sight,  
No woodman's hut, no cottage light—  
Peter, you need not fear! 390

There's nothing to be seen but woods,  
And rocks that spread a hoary gleam,  
And this one Beast, that from the bed  
Of the green meadow hangs his head  
Over the silent stream. 395

His head is with a halter bound ;  
The halter seizing, Peter leapt  
Upon the Creature's back, and plied  
With ready heels his shaggy side ;  
But still the Ass his station kept.

400

Then Peter gave a sudden jerk,  
A jerk that from a dungeon-floor  
Would have pulled up an iron ring ;  
But still the heavy-headed Thing  
Stood just as he had stood before !

405

Quoth Peter, leaping from his seat,  
" There is some plot against me laid ;"  
Once more the little meadow-ground  
And all the hoary cliffs around  
He cautiously surveyed.

410

All, all is silent—rocks and woods,  
All still and silent—far and near !  
Only the Ass, with motion dull,  
Upon the pivot of his skull  
Turns round his long left ear.

415

Thought Peter, What can mean all this ?  
Some ugly witchcraft must be here !  
—Once more the Ass, with motion dull,  
Upon the pivot of his skull  
Turned round his long left ear.

420

Suspicion ripened into dread ;  
Yet, with deliberate action slow,  
His staff high-raising, in the pride  
Of skill, upon the sounding hide  
He dealt a sturdy blow.

425

The poor Ass staggered with the shock ;  
And then, as if to take his ease,  
In quiet uncomplaining mood,  
Upon the spot where he had stood,  
Dropped gently down upon his knees ; 430

As gently on his side he fell ;  
And by the river's brink did lie ;  
And, while he lay like one that mourned,  
The patient Beast on Peter turned  
His shining hazel eye.

435

'Twas but one mild, reproachful look,  
A look more tender than severe ;  
And straight in sorrow, not in dread,  
He turned the eye-ball in his head  
Towards the smooth river deep and  
clear.

440

Upon the Beast the sapling rings ;  
His lank sides heaved, his limbs they  
stirred ;  
He gave a groan, and then another,  
Of that which went before the brother,  
And then he gave a third.

445

All by the moonlight river side  
He gave three miserable groans ;  
And not till now hath Peter seen  
How gaunt the Creature is,—how lean  
And sharp his staring bones !

450

With legs stretched out and stiff he lay :—  
No word of kind commiseration  
Fell at the sight from Peter's tongue ;  
With hard contempt his heart was wrung,  
With hatred and vexation.

455

The meagre beast lay still as death ;  
And Peter's lips with fury quiver ;  
Quoth he, " You little mulish dog,  
I'll fling your carcass like a log  
Head-foremost down the river !"

460

An impious oath confirmed the threat—  
Whereat from the earth on which he lay  
To all the echoes, south and north,  
And east and west, the Ass sent forth  
A long and clamorous bray !

465

This outcry, on the heart of Peter,  
Seems like a note of joy to strike,—  
Joy at the heart of Peter knocks ;  
But in the echo of the rocks  
Was something Peter did not like.

470

Whether to cheer his coward breast,  
Or that he could not break the chain,  
In this serene and solemn hour,  
Twined round him by demoniac power,  
To the blind work he turned again.

475

Among the rocks and winding crags ;  
Among the mountains far away ;  
Once more the Ass did lengthen out  
More ruefully a deep-drawn shout,  
The hard dry see-saw of his horrible bray !

What is there now in Peter's heart !  
Or whence the might of this strange sound ?  
The moon uneasy looked and dimmer,  
The broad blue heavens appeared to  
glimmer,  
And the rocks staggered all around—

485

From Peter's hand the sapling dropped !  
Threat has he none to execute ;  
"If any one should come and see  
That I am here, they'll think," quoth he,  
"I'm helping this poor dying brute." 490

He scans the Ass from limb to limb,  
And ventures now to uplift his eyes ;  
More steady looks the moon, and clear,  
More like themselves the rocks appear  
And touch more quiet skies. 495

His scorn returns—his hate revives ;  
He stoops the Ass's neck to seize  
With malice—that again takes flight ;  
For in the pool a startling sight  
Meets him, among the inverted trees. 500

Is it the moon's distorted face ?  
The ghost-like image of a cloud ?  
Is it a gallows there portrayed ?  
Is Peter of himself afraid ?  
Is it a coffin,—or a shroud ? 505

A grisly idol hewn in stone ?  
Or imp from witch's lap let fall ?  
Perhaps a ring of shining fairies ?  
Such as pursue their feared vagaries  
In sylvan bower, or haunted hall ? 510

Is it a fiend that to a stake  
Of fire his desperate self is tethering ?  
Or stubborn spirit doomed to yell  
In solitary ward or cell,  
Ten thousand miles from all his brethren ?

Never did pulse so quickly throb, 516  
And never heart so loudly panted ;  
He looks, he cannot choose but look ;  
Like some one reading in a book—  
A book that is enchanted. 520

Ah, well-a-day for Peter Bell !  
He will be turned to iron soon,  
Meet Statue for the court of Fear !  
His hat is up—and every hair  
Bristles, and whitens in the moon ! 525

He looks, he ponders, looks again ;  
He sees a motion—hears a groan ;  
His eyes will burst—his heart will break—  
He gives a loud and frightful shriek,  
And back he falls, as if his life were flown !

## PART SECOND.

We left our Hero in a trance, 531  
Beneath the alders, near the river ;  
The Ass is by the river-side,  
And, where the feeble breezes glide,  
Upon the stream the moonbeams quiver.

A happy respite ! but at length 536  
He feels the glimmering of the moon ;  
Wakes with glazed eye, and feebly  
sighing—

To sink, perhaps, where he is lying,  
Into a second swoon ! 540

He lifts his head, he sees his staff ;  
He touches—'tis to him a treasure !  
Faint recollection seems to tell  
That he is yet where mortals dwell—  
A thought received with languid pleasure!

His head upon his elbow propped, 546  
Becoming less and less perplexed,  
Sky-ward he looks—to rock and wood—  
And then—upon the glassy flood  
His wandering eye is fixed. 550

Thought he, that is the face of one  
In his last sleep securely bound !  
So toward the stream his head he bent,  
And downward thrust his staff, intent  
The river's depth to sound. 555

Now—like a tempest-shattered bark,  
That overwhelmed and prostrate lies,  
And in a moment to the verge  
Is lifted of a foaming surge—  
Full suddenly the Ass doth rise ! 560

His staring bones all shake with joy,  
And close by Peter's side he stands :  
While Peter o'er the river bends,  
The little Ass his neck extends,  
And fondly licks his hands. 565

Such life is in the Ass's eyes,  
Such life is in his limbs and ears ;  
That Peter Bell, if he had been  
The veriest coward ever seen,  
Must now have thrown aside his fears. 570

The Ass looks on—and to his work  
Is Peter quietly resigned ;  
He touches here—he touches there—  
And now among the dead man's hair  
His sapling Peter has entwined. 575

He pulls—and looks—and pulls again;  
And he whom the poor Ass had lost,  
The man who had been four days dead,  
Head-foremost from the river's bed  
Uprises like a ghost!

580

And Peter draws him to dry land;  
And through the brain of Peter pass  
Some poignant twitches, fast and faster;  
"No doubt," quoth he, "he is the Master  
Of this poor miserable Ass!"

585

The meagre shadow that looks on—  
What would he now? what is he doing?  
His sudden fit of joy is flown,—  
He on his knees hath laid him down,  
As if he were his grief renewing;

590

But no—that Peter on his back  
Must mount, he shows well as he can:  
Thought Peter then, come weal or woe,  
I'll do what he would have me do,  
In pity to this poor drowned man.

595

With that resolve he boldly mounts  
Upon the pleased and thankful Ass;  
And then, without a moment's stay,  
That earnest Creature turned away,  
Leaving the body on the grass.

600

Intent upon his faithful watch,  
The Beast four days and nights had past;  
A sweeter meadow ne'er was seen,  
And there the Ass four days had been,  
Nor ever once did break his fast:

605

Yet firm his step, and stout his heart;  
The mead is crossed—the quarry's mouth  
Is reached; but there the trusty guide  
Into a thicket turns aside,  
And deftly ambles towards the south.

610

When hark a burst of doleful sound!  
And Peter honestly might say,  
The like came never to his ears,  
Though he has been, full thirty years,  
A rover—night and day!

615

'Tis not a plover of the moors,  
'Tis not a bittern of the fen;  
Nor can it be a barking fox,  
Nor night-bird chambered in the rocks,  
Nor wild-cat in a woody glen!

620

The Ass is startled—and stops short  
Right in the middle of the thicket;  
And Peter, wont to whistle loud  
Whether alone or in a crowd,  
Is silent as a silent cricket.

625

What ails you now, my little Bess?  
Well may you tremble and look grave!  
This cry—that rings along the wood,  
This cry—that floats adown the flood,  
Comes from the entrance of a cave:

630

I see a blooming Wood-boy there,  
And if I had the power to say  
How sorrowful the wanderer is,  
Your heart would be as sad as his  
Till you had kissed his tears away!

635

Grasping a hawthorn branch in hand,  
All bright with berries ripe and red,  
Into the cavern's mouth he peeps;  
Thence back into the moonlight creeps;  
Whom seeks he—whom?—the silent  
dead:

640

His father!—Him doth he require—  
Him hath he sought with fruitless pains,  
Among the rocks, behind the trees;  
Now creeping on his hands and knees,  
Now running o'er the open plains.

645

And hither is he come at last,  
When he through such a day has gone,  
By this dark cave to be distressed  
Like a poor bird—her plundered nest  
Hovering around with dolorous moan!

650

Of that intense and piercing cry  
The listening Ass conjectures well;  
Wild as it is, he there can read  
Some intermingled notes that plead  
With touches irresistible.

655

But Peter—when he saw the Ass  
Not only stop but turn, and change  
The cherished tenor of his pace  
That lamentable cry to chase—  
It wrought in him conviction strange;

660

A faith that for the dead man's sake,  
And this poor slave who loved him well,  
Vengeance upon his head will fall,  
Some visitation worse than all  
Which ever till this night befell.

665

Meanwhile the Ass to reach his home  
Is striving stoutly as he may ;  
But, while he climbs the woody hill,  
The cry grows weak—and weaker still ;  
And now at last it dies away. 670

So with his freight the Creature turns  
Into a gloomy grove of beech,  
Along the shade with footsteps true  
Descending slowly, till the two  
The open moonlight reach. 675

And there, along the narrow dell,  
A fair smooth pathway you discern,  
A length of green and open road—  
As if it from a fountain flowed—  
Winding away between the fern. 680

The rocks that tower on either side  
Build up a wild fantastic scene ;  
Temples like those among the Hindoos,  
And mosques, and spires, and abbey-win-  
dows,  
And castles all with ivy green ! 685

And while the Ass pursues his way  
Along this solitary dell,  
As pensively his steps advance,  
The mosques and spires change counte-  
nance,  
And look at Peter Bell ! 690

That unintelligible cry  
Hath left him high in preparation,—  
Convinced that he, or soon or late,  
This very night will meet his fate—  
And so he sits in expectation ! 695

The strenuous Animal hath clomb  
With the green path ; and now he wends  
Where, shining like the smoothest sea,  
In undisturbed immensity  
A level plain extends. 700

But whence this faintly-rustling sound  
By which the journeying pair are chased ?  
—A withered leaf is close behind,  
Light plaything for the sportive wind  
Upon that solitary waste. 705

When Peter spied the moving thing,  
It only doubled his distress ;  
“Where there is not a bush or tree,  
The very leaves they follow me—  
So huge hath been my wickedness !” 710

To a close lane they now are come,  
Where, as before, the enduring Ass  
Moves on without a moment's stop,  
Nor once turns round his head to crop  
A bramble-leaf or blade of grass. 715

Between the hedges as they go,  
The white dust sleeps upon the lane ;  
And Peter, ever and anon  
Back-looking, sees, upon a stone,  
Or in the dust, a crimson stain. 720

A stain—as of a drop of blood  
By moonlight made more faint and wan ;  
Ha ! why these sinkings of despair ?  
He knows not how the blood comes there—  
And Peter is a wicked man. 725

At length he spies a bleeding wound,  
Where he had struck the Ass's head ;  
He sees the blood, knows what it is,—  
A glimpse of sudden joy was his,  
But then it quickly fled ; 730

Of him whom sudden death had seized  
He thought,—of thee, O faithful Ass !  
And once again those ghastly pains,  
Shoot to and fro through heart and reins,  
And through his brain like lightning  
pass. 735

## PART THIRD.

I've heard of one, a gentle Soul,  
Though given to sadness and to gloom,  
And for the fact will vouch,—one night  
It chanced that by a taper's light  
This man was reading in his room ; 740

Bending, as you or I might bend  
At night o'er any pious book,  
When sudden blackness overspread  
The snow-white page on which he read,  
And made the good man round him look.

The chamber walls were dark all round,—  
And to his book he turned again ;  
—The light had left the lonely taper,  
And formed itself upon the paper  
Into large letters—bright and plain ! 750

The godly book was in his hand—  
And on the page, more black than coal,  
Appeared, set forth in strange array,  
A word—which to his dying day  
Perplexed the good man's gentle soul. 755

The ghostly word, thus plainly seen,  
Did never from his lips depart;  
But he hath said, poor gentle wight!  
It brought full many a sin to light  
Out of the bottom of his heart. 760

Dread Spirits! to confound the meek  
Why wander from your course so far,  
Disordering colour, form, and stature!  
—Let good men feel the soul of nature,  
And see things as they are. 765

Yet, potent Spirits! well I know,  
How ye, that play with soul and sense,  
Are not unused to trouble friends  
Of goodness, for most gracious ends—  
And this I speak in reverence! 770

But might I give advice to you,  
Whom in my fear I love so well;  
From men of pensive virtue go,  
Dread Beings! and your empire show  
On hearts like that of Peter Bell 775

Your presence often have I felt  
In darkness and the stormy night;  
And with like force, if need there be,  
Ye can put forth your agency 779  
When earth is calm, and heaven is bright.

Then coming from the wayward world,  
That powerful world in which ye dwell,  
Come, Spirits of the Mind! and try,  
To-night, beneath the moonlight sky,  
What may be done with Peter Bell! 785

—O, would that some more skilful voice  
My further labour might prevent!  
Kind Listeners, that around me sit,  
I feel that I am all unfit  
For such high argument. 790

I've played, I've danced, with my nar-  
ration;  
I loitered long ere I began:  
Ye waited then on my good pleasure;  
Pour out indulgence still, in measure  
As liberal as ye can! 795

Our Travellers, ye remember well,  
Are thridding a sequestered lane;

And Peter many tricks is trying,  
And many anodynes applying,  
To ease his conscience of its pain. 800

By this his heart is lighter far;  
And, finding that he can account  
So snugly for that crimson stain,  
His evil spirit up again  
Does like an empty bucket mount. 805

And Peter is a deep logician  
Who hath no lack of wit mercurial;  
“Blood drops—leaves rustle—yet,” quoth  
he,  
“This poor man never but for me  
Could have had Christian burial. 810

“And, say the best you can, 'tis plain,  
That here has been some wicked dealing;  
No doubt the devil in me wrought;  
I'm not the man who could have thought  
An Ass like this was worth the steal-  
ing!” 815

So from his pocket Peter takes  
His shining horn tobacco-box;  
And in a light and careless way,  
As men who with their purpose play,  
Upon the lid he knocks. 820

Let them whose voice can stop the clouds,  
Whose cunning eye can see the wind,  
Tell to a curious world the cause  
Why, making here a sudden pause,  
The Ass turned round his head and grin-  
ned. 825

Appalling process! I have marked  
The like on heath, in lonely wood;  
And, verily, have seldom met  
A spectacle more hideous—yet  
It suited Peter's present mood. 830

And, grinning in his turn, his teeth  
He in jocose defiance showed—  
When, to upset his spiteful mirth,  
A murmur, pent within the earth,  
In the dead earth beneath the road, 835

Rolled audibly!—it swept along,  
A muffled noise—a rumbling sound!—  
'Twas by a troop of miners made,  
Plying with gunpowder their trade,  
Some twenty fathoms under ground. 840

Small cause of dire effect ! for, surely,  
If ever mortal, King or Cotter,  
Believed that earth was charged to quake  
And yawn for his unworthy sake,  
'Twas Peter Bell the Potter. 845

But as an oak in breathless air  
Will stand though to the centre hewn ;  
Or as the weakest things, if frost  
Have stiffened them, maintain their post ;  
So he, beneath the gazing moon !— 850

The Beast bestriding thus, he reached  
A spot where, in a sheltering cove,  
A little chapel stands alone,  
With greenest ivy overgrown,  
And tufted with an ivy grove ; 855

Dying insensibly away  
From human thoughts and purposes,  
It seemed—wall, window, roof and tower—  
To bow to some transforming power,  
And blend with the surrounding trees. 860

As ruinous a place it was,  
Thought Peter, in the shire of Fife  
That served my turn, when following still  
From land to land a reckless will  
I married my sixth wife ! 865

The unheeding Ass moves slowly on,  
And now is passing by an inn  
Brim-full of a carousing crew,  
That make, with curses not a few,  
An uproar and a drunken din. 870

I cannot well express the thoughts  
Which Peter in those noises found ;—  
A stifling power compressed his frame,  
While-as a swimming darkness came  
Over that dull and dreary sound. 875

For well did Peter know the sound ;  
The language of those drunken joys  
To him, a jovial soul, I ween,  
But a few hours ago, had been  
A gladsome and a welcome noise. 880

Now, turned adrift into the past,  
He finds no solace in his course ;  
Like planet-stricken men of yore,  
He trembles, smitten to the core  
By strong compunction and remorse. 885

But, more than all, his heart is stung  
To think of one, almost a child ;  
A sweet and playful Highland girl,  
As light and beauteous as a squirrel,  
As beauteous and as wild ! 890

Her dwelling was a lonely house,  
A cottage in a heathy dell ;  
And she put on her gown of green,  
And left her mother at sixteen,  
And followed Peter Bell. 895

But many good and pious thoughts  
Had she ; and, in the kirk to pray,  
Two long Scotch miles, through rain or  
snow,  
To kirk she had been used to go,  
Twice every Sabbath-day. 900

And, when she followed Peter Bell,  
It was to lead an honest life ;  
For he, with tongue not used to falter,  
Had pledged his troth before the altar  
To love her as his wedded wife. 905

A mother's hope is hers ;—but soon  
She drooped and pined like one forlorn ;  
From Scripture she a name did borrow ;  
Benoni, or the child of sorrow,  
She called her babe unborn. 910

For she had learned how Peter lived,  
And took it in most grievous part ;  
She to the very bone was worn,  
And, ere that little child was born,  
Died of a broken heart. 915

And now the Spirits of the Mind  
Are busy with poor Peter Bell ;  
Upon the rights of visual sense  
Usurping, with a prevalence  
More terrible than magic spell. 920

Close by a brake of flowering furze  
(Above it shivering aspens play)  
He sees an unsubstantial creature,  
His very self in form and feature, 924  
Not four yards from the broad highway :

And stretched beneath the furze he sees  
The Highland girl—it is no other ;  
And hears her crying as she cried,  
The very moment that she died,  
“My mother ! oh my mother !” 930

The sweat pours down from Peter's face,  
So grievous is his heart's contrition;  
With agony his eye-balls ache  
While he beholds by the furze-brake  
This miserable vision! 935

Calm is the well-deserving brute,  
His peace hath no offence betrayed;  
But now, while down that slope he wends,  
A voice to Peter's ear ascends,  
Resounding from the woody glade: 940

The voice, though clamorous as a horn  
Re-echoed by a naked rock,  
Comes from that tabernacle—List!  
Within, a fervent Methodist  
Is preaching to no heedless flock! 945

"Repent! repent!" he cries aloud,  
"While yet ye may find mercy;—strive  
To love the Lord with all your might;  
Turn to him, seek him day and night,  
And save your souls alive! 950

"Repent! repent! though ye have gone,  
Through paths of wickedness and woe,  
After the Babylonian harlot;  
And though your sins be red as scarlet,  
They shall be white as snow!" 955

Even as he passed the door, these words  
Did plainly come to Peter's ears;  
And they such joyful tidings were,  
The joy was more than he could bear!—  
He melted into tears. 960

Sweet tears of hope and tenderness!  
And fast they fell, a plenteous shower!  
His nerves, his sinews seemed to melt;  
Through all his iron frame was felt  
A gentle, a relaxing, power! 965

Each fibre of his frame was weak;  
Weak all the animal within;  
But, in its helplessness, grew mild  
And gentle as an infant child,  
An infant that has known no sin. 970

'Tis said, meek Beast! that, through Heaven's grace,  
He not unmoved did notice now  
The cross upon thy shoulder scored,  
For lasting impress, by the Lord  
To whom all human-kind shall bow; 975

Memorial of his touch—that day  
When Jesus humbly deigned to ride,  
Entering the proud Jerusalem,  
By an immeasurable stream  
Of shouting people deified! 980

Meanwhile the persevering Ass  
Turned towards a gate that hung in view  
Across a shady lane; his chest  
Against the yielding gate he pressed  
And quietly passed through. 985

And up the stony lane he goes;  
No ghost more softly ever trod;  
Among the stones and pebbles he  
Sets down his hoofs inaudibly,  
As if with felt his hoofs were shod. 990

Along the lane the trusty Ass  
Went twice two hundred yards or more,  
And no one could have guessed his aim,—  
Till to a lonely house he came,  
And stopped beside the door. 995

Thought Peter, 'tis the poor man's home.  
He listens—not a sound is heard  
Save from the trickling household rill;  
But, stepping o'er the cottage-sill,  
Forthwith a little Girl appeared. 1000

She to the Meeting-house was bound  
In hopes some tidings there to gather:  
No glimpse it is, no doubtful gleam;  
She saw—and uttered with a scream,  
"My father! here's my father!" 1005

The very word was plainly heard,  
Heard plainly by the wretched Mother—  
Her joy was like a deep affright:  
And forth she rushed into the light,  
And saw it was another! 1010

And instantly upon the earth,  
Beneath the full moon shining bright,  
Close to the Ass's feet she fell;  
At the same moment Peter Bell  
Dismounts in most unhappy plight. 1015

As he beheld the Woman lie  
Breathless and motionless, the mind  
Of Peter sadly was confused;  
But, though to such demands unused,  
And helpless almost as the blind, 1020

He raised her up; and while he held  
Her body propped against his knee,  
The Woman waked—and when she spied  
The poor Ass standing by her side,  
She moaned most bitterly. 1025

“Oh! God be praised—my heart’s at  
ease—  
For he is dead—I know it well!”  
—At this she wept a bitter flood;  
And, in the best way that he could,  
His tale did Peter tell. 1030

He trembles—he is pale as death;  
His voice is weak with perturbation;  
He turns aside his head, he pauses;  
Poor Peter from a thousand causes  
Is crippled sore in his narration. 1035

At length she learned how he espied  
The Ass in that small meadow-ground;  
And that her Husband now lay dead,  
Beside that luckless river’s bed  
In which he had been drowned. 1040

A piercing look the Widow cast  
Upon the Beast that near her stands;  
She sees ’tis he, that ’tis the same;  
She calls the poor Ass by his name,  
And wrings, and wrings her hands. 1045

“O wretched loss—untimely stroke!  
If he had died upon his bed!  
He knew not one forewarning pain;  
He never will come home again—  
Is dead, for ever dead!” 1050

Beside the Woman Peter stands;  
His heart is opening more and more;  
A holy sense pervades his mind;  
He feels what he for human-kind  
Has never felt before. 1055

At length, by Peter’s arm sustained,  
The Woman rises from the ground—  
“Oh, mercy! something must be done,  
My little Rachel, you must run,—  
Some willing neighbour must be found.

“Make haste—my little Rachel—do, 1061  
The first you meet with—bid him come,  
Ask him to lend his horse to-night,  
And this good Man, whom Heaven requite,  
Will help to bring the body home.” 1065

Away goes Rachel weeping loud;—  
An Infant, waked by her distress,  
Makes in the house a piteous cry;  
And Peter hears the Mother sigh,  
“Seven are they, and all fatherless!” 1070

And now is Peter taught to feel  
That man’s heart is a holy thing;  
And Nature, through a world of death,  
Breathes into him a second breath,  
More searching than the breath of spring.

Upon a stone the Woman sits 1076  
In agony of silent grief—  
From his own thoughts did Peter start;  
He longs to press her to his heart,  
From love that cannot find relief. 1080

But roused, as if through every limb  
Had past a sudden shock of dread,  
The Mother o’er the threshold flies,  
And up the cottage stairs she hies,  
And on the pillow lays her burning  
head. 1085

And Peter turns his steps aside  
Into a shade of darksome trees,  
Where he sits down, he knows not how,  
With his hands pressed against his brow,  
His elbows on his tremulous knees. 1090

There, self-involved, does Peter sit  
Until no sign of life he makes,  
As if his mind were sinking deep  
Through years that have been long asleep!  
The trance is passed away—he wakes;

He lifts his head—and sees the Ass 1096  
Yet standing in the clear moonshine;  
“When shall I be as good as thou?  
Oh! would, poor beast, that I had now  
A heart but half as good as thine!” 1100

But *He*—who deviously hath sought  
His Father through the lonesome woods,  
Hath sought, proclaiming to the ear  
Of night his grief and sorrowful fear—  
He comes, escaped from fields and  
floods;— 1105

With weary pace is drawing nigh;  
He sees the Ass—and nothing living  
Had ever such a fit of joy  
As hath this little orphan Boy,  
For he has no misgiving! 1110

Forth to the gentle Ass he springs,  
And up about his neck he climbs;  
In loving words he talks to him,  
He kisses, kisses face and limb,—  
He kisses him a thousand times! 1115

This Peter sees, while in the shade  
He stood beside the cottage-door;

And Peter Bell, the ruffian wild,  
Sobs loud, he sobs even like a child,  
“Oh! God, I can endure no more!” 1120

—Here ends my Tale: for in a trice  
Arrived a neighbour with his horse;  
Peter went forth with him straightway;  
And, with due care, ere break of day,  
Together they brought back the Corse.

And many years did this poor Ass, 1126  
Whom once it was my luck to see  
Cropping the shrubs of Leming-Lane,  
Help by his labour to maintain  
The Widow and her family. 1130

And Peter Bell, who, till that night,  
Had been the wildest of his clan,  
Forsook his crimes, renounced his folly,  
And, after ten months' melancholy,  
Became a good and honest man. 1135

# MISCELLANEOUS SONNETS.

## DEDICATION.

TO —.

[Composed 1826 (?).—Published 1827.]

HAPPY the feeling from the bosom thrown  
In perfect shape (whose beauty Time shall spare  
Though a breath made it) like a bubble blown  
For summer pastime into wanton air;  
Happy the thought best likened to a stone 5  
Of the sea-beach, when, polished with nice care,  
Veins it discovers exquisite and rare,  
Which for the loss of that moist gleam atone  
That tempted first to gather it. That here,  
O chief of Friends! such feelings I present 10  
To thy regard, with thoughts so fortunate,  
Were a vain notion; but the hope is dear  
That thou, if not with partial joy elate,  
Wilt smile upon this gift with more than mild  
content!

## PART I.

### I.

[Composed ?.—Published 1807.]

NUNS fret not at their convent's narrow  
room;  
And hermits are contented with their  
cells;  
And students with their pensive citadels;  
Maidens at the wheel, the weaver at his  
loom,  
Sit blithe and happy; bees that soar for  
bloom, 5  
High as the highest Peak of Furness-fells,  
Will murmur by the hour in foxglove  
bells:  
In truth the prison, unto which we doom  
Ourselves, no prison is: and hence for me,  
In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be  
bound 10  
Within the Sonnet's scanty plot of ground;  
Pleased if some Souls (for such there needs  
must be)

Who have felt the weight of too much  
liberty,  
Should find brief solace there, as I have  
found.

### II.

#### ADMONITION.

Intended more particularly for the perusal of  
those who may have happened to be enamoured  
of some beautiful place of Retreat, in the Coun-  
try of the Lakes.

[Composed ?.—Published 1807.]

WELL may'st thou halt—and gaze with  
brightening eye!  
The lovely Cottage in the guardian nook  
Hath stirred thee deeply; with its own  
dear brook,  
Its own small pasture, almost its own sky!  
But covet not the Abode;—forbear to  
sigh, 5  
As many do, repining while they look;  
Intruders—who would tear from Nature's  
book  
This precious leaf, with harsh impiety.  
Think what the Home must be if it were  
thine,  
Even thine, though few thy wants!—Roof,  
window, door, 10  
The very flowers are sacred to the Poor,  
The roses to the porch which they entwine:  
Yea, all, that now enchants thee, from  
the day  
On which it should be touched, would  
melt away.

### III.

[Composed ?.—Published 1807.]

"BELOVED Vale!" I said, "when I shall  
con  
Those many records of my childish years,  
Remembrance of myself and of my peers

Will press me down : to think of what is  
gone  
Will be an awful thought, if life have  
one." 5  
But, when into the Vale I came, no fears  
Distressed me; from mine eyes escaped  
no tears;  
Deep thought, or dread remembrance, had  
I none.  
By doubts and thousand petty fancies crost  
I stood, of simple shame the blushing  
Thrall; 10  
So narrow seemed the brooks, the fields  
so small!  
A Juggler's balls old Time about him  
tossed;  
I looked, I stared, I smiled, I laughed;  
and all  
The weight of sadness was in wonder lost.

## IV.

AT APPLETHWAITE, NEAR KESWICK.

[Composed 1804.—Published 1842.]

BEAUMONT! it was thy wish that I should  
rear  
A seemly Cottage in this sunny Dell,  
On favoured ground, thy gift, where I  
might dwell  
In neighbourhood with One to me most  
dear,  
That undivided we from year to year 5  
Might work in our high Calling—a bright  
hope  
To which our fancies, mingling, gave free  
scope  
Till checked by some necessities severe.  
And should these slacken, honoured  
BEAUMONT! still  
Even then we may perhaps in vain  
implore 10  
Leave of our fate thy wishes to fulfil.  
Whether this boon be granted us or not,  
Old Skiddaw will look down upon the Spot  
With pride, the Muses love it evermore.

## V.

[Composed 1801.—Published 1815.]

PELION and Ossa flourish side by side,  
Together in immortal books enrolled:  
His ancient dower Olympus hath not sold;

And that inspiring Hill, which "did  
divide  
Into two ample horns his forehead wide," 5  
Shines with poetic radiance as of old;  
While not an English Mountain we behold  
By the celestial Muses glorified.  
Yet round our sea-girt shore they rise in  
crowds:  
What was the great Parnassus' self to  
Thee, 10  
Mount Skiddaw? In his natural so-  
vereignty  
Our British Hill is nobler far; he shrouds  
His double front among Atlantic clouds,  
And pours forth streams more sweet than  
Castaly.

## VI.

[Composed 1801.—Published 1820.]

THERE is a little unpretending Rill  
Of limpid water, humbler far than aught  
That ever among Men or Naiads sought  
Notice or name!—It quivers down the  
hill,  
Furrowing its shallow way with dubious  
will; 5  
Yet to my mind this scanty Stream is  
brought  
Often than Ganges or the Nile; a  
thought  
Of private recollection sweet and still!  
Months perish with their moons; year  
treads on year;  
But, faithful Emma! thou with me canst  
say 10  
That, while ten thousand pleasures dis-  
appear,  
And flies their memory fast almost as they;  
The immortal Spirit of one happy day  
Lingers beside that Rill, in vision clear.

## VII.

[Composed ?.—Published 1827.]

HER only pilot the soft breeze, the boat  
Lingers, but Fancy is well satisfied;  
With keen-eyed Hope, with Memory, at  
her side,  
And the glad Muse at liberty to note  
All that to each is precious, as we float 5

Gently along; regardless who shall chide  
 If the heavens smile, and leave us free to  
 glide,  
 Happy Associates breathing air remote  
 From trivial cares. But, Fancy and the  
 Muse,  
 Why have I crowded this small bark with  
 you 10  
 And others of your kind, ideal crew!  
 While here sits One whose brightness  
 owes its hues  
 To flesh and blood; no Goddess from  
 above,  
 No fleeting Spirit, but my own true Love?

## VIII.

[Composed ?.—Published 1815.]

THE fairest, brightest, hues of ether fade;  
 The sweetest notes must terminate and  
 die;  
 O Friend! thy flute has breathed a  
 harmony  
 Softly resounded through this rockyglade;  
 Such strains of rapture as<sup>1</sup> the Genius  
 played 5  
 In his still haunt on Bagdad's summit  
 high;  
 He who stood visible to Mirza's eye,  
 Never before to human sight betrayed.  
 Lo, in the vale, the mists of evening  
 spread!  
 The visionary Arches are not there, 10  
 Nor the green Islands, nor the shining  
 Seas;  
 Yet sacred is to me this Mountain's head,  
 Whence I have risen, uplifted on the  
 breeze  
 Of harmony, above all earthly care.

## IX.

UPON THE SIGHT OF A BEAUTIFUL PICTURE,  
 Painted by Sir G. H. Beaumont, Bart.

[Composed August, 1811.—Published 1815.]

PRaised be the Art whose subtle power  
 could stay  
 Yon cloud, and fix it in that glorious  
 shape;

<sup>1</sup> See the "Vision of Mirza" in the "Spectator."

Nor would permit the thin smoke to  
 escape,  
 Nor those bright sunbeams to forsake the  
 day;  
 Which stopped that band of travellers on  
 their way,  
 Ere they were lost within the shady 5  
 wood;  
 And showed the Bark upon the glassy  
 flood  
 For ever anchored in her sheltering  
 bay.  
 Soul-soothing Art! whom Morning, Noon-  
 tide, Even,  
 Do serve with all their changeful  
 pageantry; 10  
 Thou, with ambition modest yet sublime,  
 Here, for the sight of mortal man, hast  
 given  
 To one brief moment caught from fleeting  
 time  
 The appropriate calm of blest eternity.

## X.

[Composed ?.—Published 1827.]

"WHY, Minstrel, these untuneful mur-  
 murings—  
 Dull, flagging notes that with each other  
 jar?"  
 "Think, gentle Lady, of a Harp so far  
 From its own country, and forgive the  
 strings."  
 A simple answer! but even so forth  
 springs, 5  
 From the Castalian fountain of the heart,  
 The Poetry of Life, and all that  
 Art  
 Divine of words quickening insensate  
 things.  
 From the submissive necks of guiltless  
 men  
 Stretched on the block the glittering axe  
 recoils; 10  
 Sun, moon, and stars, all struggle in the  
 toils  
 Of mortal sympathy; what wonder then  
 That the poor Harp distempered music  
 yields  
 To its sad Lord, far from his native  
 fields?

## XI.

[Composed ?.—Published 1819<sup>1</sup>.]

AERIAL Rock—whose solitary brow  
From this low threshold daily meets my  
sight;

When I step forth to hail the morning  
light;

Or quit the stars with a lingering fare-  
well—how

Shall Fancy pay to thee a grateful vow? 5

How, with the Muse's aid, her love attest?

—By planting on thy naked head the crest

Of an imperial Castle, which the plough

Of ruin shall not touch. Innocent scheme!

That doth presume no more than to sup-  
ply 10

A grace the sinuous vale and roaring  
stream

Want, through neglect of hoar Antiquity.

Rise, then, ye votive Towers! and catch a  
gleam

Of golden sunset, ere it fade and die.

## XII.

TO SLEEP.

[Composed ?.—Published 1807.]

O GENTLE Sleep! do they belong to thee,  
These twinklings of oblivion? Thou dost  
love

To sit in meekness, like the brooding  
Dove,

A captive never wishing to be free.

This tiresome night, O Sleep! thou art  
to me 5

A Fly, that up and down himself doth  
shove

Upon a fretful rivulet, now above,

Now on the water vexed with mockery.

I have no pain that calls for patience, no;

Hence am I cross and peevish as a  
child: 10

Am pleased by fits to have thee for my  
foe,

Yet ever willing to be reconciled:

O gentle Creature! do not use me so,  
But once and deeply let me be beguiled.

## XIII.

TO SLEEP.

[Composed ?.—Published 1807.]

FOND words have oft been spoken to thee,  
Sleep!

And thou hast had thy store of tenderest  
names;

The very sweetest Fancy culls or frames,  
When thankfulness of heart is strong and

deep!

Dear Bosom-child we call thee, that dost  
steep 5

In rich reward all suffering; Balm that  
tames

All anguish; Saint that evil thoughts and  
aims

Takest away, and into souls dost creep,  
Like to a breeze from heaven. Shall I

alone,

I surely not a man ungently made, 10  
Call thee worst Tyrant by which Flesh is  
crost?

Perverse, self-willed to own and to disown,  
Mere slave of them who never for thee

prayed,

Still last to come where thou art wanted  
most!

## XIV.

TO SLEEP.

[Composed ?.—Published 1807.]

A FLOCK of sheep that leisurely pass by,  
One after one; the sound of rain, and bees

Murmuring; the fall of rivers, winds and  
seas,

Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and  
pure sky;

I have thought of all by turns, and yet  
do lie 5

Sleepless! and soon the small birds' 5  
melodies

Must hear, first uttered from my orchard  
trees;

And the first cuckoo's melancholy cry.

Even thus last night, and two nights  
more, I lay

<sup>1</sup> This, and eleven other Sonnets here marked simply "1819," appeared in the vol. containing *The Waggoner*, which was published in the summer of 1819 shortly after *Peter Bell*.—Ed.

And could not win thee, Sleep! by any  
stealth: 10  
So do not let me wear to-night away:  
Without Thee what is all the morning's  
wealth?  
Come, blessed barrier between day and day,  
Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous  
health!

## XV.

## THE WILD DUCK'S NEST.

[Composed ?.—Published 1819.]

THE imperial Consort of the Fairy-king  
Owns not a sylvan bower; or gorgeous cell  
With emerald floored, and with purpleal  
shell  
Ceilinged and roofed; that is so fair a  
thing  
As this low structure, for the tasks of  
Spring 5  
Prepared by one who loves the buoyant  
swell  
Of the brisk waves, yet here consents to  
dwell;  
And spreads in steadfast peace her brood-  
ing wing.  
Words cannot paint the o'ershadowing  
yew-tree bough,  
And dimly-gleaming Nest,—a hollow  
crown 10  
Of golden leaves inlaid with silver down,  
Fine as the mother's softest plumes allow:  
I gazed—and, self-accused while gazing,  
sighed  
For human-kind, weak slaves of cumbrous  
pride!

## XVI.

WRITTEN UPON A BLANK LEAF IN "THE  
COMPLETE ANGLER."

[Composed ?.—Published 1819.]

WHILE flowing rivers yield a blameless  
sport,  
Shall live the name of Walton: Sage  
benign!  
Whose pen, the mysteries of the rod and  
line  
Unfolding, did not fruitlessly exhort 4  
To reverend watching of each still report  
That Nature utters from her rural shrine.  
Meek, nobly versed in simple discipline—

He found the longest summer day too  
short,  
To his loved pastime given by sedgy Lee,  
Or down the tempting maze of Shawford  
brook— 10  
Fairer than life itself, in this sweet Book,  
The cowslip-bank and shady willow-tree;  
And the fresh meads—where flowed, from  
every nook  
Of his full bosom, gladsome Piety!

## XVII.

## TO THE POET, JOHN DYER.

[Composed 1811.—Published 1820.]

BARD of the Fleece, whose skilful genius  
made  
That work a living landscape fair and  
bright;  
Nor hallowed less with musical delight  
Than those soft scenes through which thy  
childhood strayed,  
Those southern tracts of Cambria, "deep  
embayed, 5  
With green hills fenced, with ocean's mur-  
mur lulled;"  
Though hasty Fame hath many a chaplet  
culled  
For worthless brows, while in the pensive  
shade  
Of cold neglect she leaves thy head un-  
graced,  
Yet pure and powerful minds, hearts  
meek and still, 10  
A grateful few, shall love thy modest Lay,  
Long as the shepherd's bleating flock  
shall stray  
O'er naked Snowdon's wide aerial waste;  
Long as the thrush shall pipe on Gron-  
gar Hill!

## XVIII.

ON THE DETRACTION WHICH FOLLOWED THE  
PUBLICATION OF A CERTAIN POEM.

[Composed 1820.—Published 1820.]

See Milton's Sonnet, beginning, "A Book was  
writ of late called 'Tetrachordon.'"  
A BOOK came forth of late, called PETER  
BELL;  
Not negligent the style;—the matter?—  
good

As aught that song records of Robin  
Hood;  
Or Roy, renowned through many a Scot-  
tish dell;  
But some (who brook those hackneyed  
themes full well, 5  
Nor heat, at Tam o' Shanter's name, their  
blood)  
Waxed wroth, and with foul claws, a  
harpy brood,  
On Bard and Hero clamorously fell.  
Heed not, wild Rover once through heath  
and glen,  
Who mad'st at length the better life thy  
choice, 10  
Heed not such onset! nay, if praise of  
men  
To thee appear not an unmeaning  
voice,  
Lift up that grey-haired forehead, and  
rejoice  
In the just tribute of thy Poet's pen!

XIX.

[Composed ?.—Published 1819.]

GRIEF, thou hast lost an ever-ready  
friend  
Now that the cottage Spinning-wheel is  
mute;  
And Care—a comforter that best could  
suit  
Her froward mood, and softliest repre-  
hend;  
And Love—a charmer's voice, that used  
to lend, 5  
More efficaciously than aught that  
flows  
From harp or lute, kind influence to  
compose  
The throbbing pulse—else troubled with-  
out end:  
Even Joy could tell, Joy craving truce  
and rest  
From her own overflow, what power  
sedate 10  
On those revolving motions did await  
Assiduously—to soothe her aching breast;  
And, to a point of just relief, abate  
The mantling triumphs of a day too  
blest.

XX.

TO S. H.

[Composed ?.—Published 1827.]

EXCUSE is needless when with love sincere  
Of occupation, not by fashion led,  
Thou turn'st the Wheel that slept with  
dust o'erspread;  
My nerves from no such murmur shrink,—  
tho' near,  
Soft as the Dorhawk's to a distant ear, 5  
When twilight shades darken the moun-  
tain's head.  
Even She who toils to spin our vital  
thread  
Might smile on work, O Lady, once so  
dear  
To household virtues. Venerable Art,  
Torn from the Poor! yet shall kind Hea-  
ven protect 10  
Its own; though Rulers, with undue  
respect,  
Trusting to crowded factory and mart  
And proud discoveries of the intellect,  
Heed not the pillage of man's ancient  
heart.

XXI.

COMPOSED IN ONE OF THE VALLEYS OF  
WESTMORELAND, ON EASTER SUNDAY.

[Composed ?.—Published 1819.]

WITH each recurrence of this glorious  
morn  
That saw the Saviour in his human frame  
Rise from the dead, erewhile the Cottage-  
dame  
Put on fresh raiment—till that hour un-  
worn:  
Domestic hands the home-bred wool had  
shorn, 5  
And she who span it culled the daintiest  
fleece,  
In thoughtful reverence to the Prince of  
Peace,  
Whose temples bled beneath the platted  
thorn.  
A blest estate when piety sublime  
These humble props disdained not! O  
green dales! 10

Sad may I be who heard your sabbath  
chime  
When Art's abused inventions were un-  
known;  
Kind Nature's various wealth was all  
your own;  
And benefits were weighed in Reason's  
scales!

## XXII.

## DECAY OF PIETY.

[Composed ?.—Published 1827.]

Ort have I seen, ere Time had ploughed  
my cheek,  
Matrons and Sires—who, punctual to  
the call  
Of their loved Church, on fast or festival  
Through the long year the House of  
Prayer would seek:  
By Christmas snows, by visitation bleak  
Of Easter winds, unscared, from hut or  
hall  
They came to lowly bench or sculptured  
stall,  
But with one fervour of devotion meek.  
I see the places where they once were  
known,  
And ask, surrounded even by kneeling  
crowds,  
Is ancient Piety for ever flown?  
Alas! even then they seemed like fleecy  
clouds  
That, struggling through the western sky,  
have won  
Their pensive light from a departed sun!

## XXIII.

COMPOSED ON THE EVE OF THE MARRIAGE  
OF A FRIEND<sup>1</sup> IN THE VALE OF GRAS-  
MERE, 1812.

[Composed 1812.—Published 1815.]

WHAT need of clamorous bells, or ribands  
gay,  
These humble nuptials to proclaim or  
grace?  
Angels of love, look down upon the place;

<sup>1</sup> The poet's wife's brother, Thomas Hutchinson, who married Mary Monkhouse, November 1, 1812.—Ed.

Shed on the chosen vale a sun-bright day!  
Yet no proud gladness would the Bride  
display  
Even for such promise:—serious is her  
face,  
Modest her mien; and she, whose thoughts  
keep pace  
With gentleness, in that becoming way  
Will thank you. Faultless does the Maid  
appear;  
No disproportion in her soul, no strife:  
But, when the closer view of wedded life  
Hath shown that nothing human can  
be clear  
From frailty, for that insight may the  
Wife  
To her indulgent Lord become more dear.

## XXIV.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF MICHAEL ANGELO.

## I.

[Composed 1805.—Published 1807.]

YES! hope may with my strong desire  
keep pace,  
And I be undeluded, unbetrayed;  
For if of our affections none finds grace  
In sight of Heaven, then, wherefore hath  
God made  
The world which we inhabit? Better plea  
Love cannot have than that in loving thee  
Glory to that eternal Peace is paid,  
Who such divinity to thee imparts  
As hallows and makes pure all gentle  
hearts.  
His hope is treacherous only whose love dies  
With beauty, which is varying every hour;  
But in chaste hearts, uninfluenced by the  
power  
Of outward change, there blooms a death-  
less flower,  
That breathes on earth the air of paradise.

## XXV.

FROM THE SAME.

## II.

[Composed probably 1805.—Published 1807.]

No mortal object did these eyes behold  
When first they met the placid light of  
thine,  
And my Soul felt her destiny divine,

And hope of endless peace in me grew  
bold:  
Heaven-born, the Soul a heavenward  
course must hold; 5  
Beyond the visible world she soars to seek  
(For what delights the sense is false and  
weak)  
Ideal Form, the universal mould.  
The wise man, I affirm, can find no rest  
In that which perishes: nor will he lend  
His heart to aught which doth on time  
depend. 11  
'Tis sense, unbridled will, and not true  
love,  
That kills the soul: love betters what  
is best,  
Even here below, but more in heaven  
above.

## XXVI.

FROM THE SAME. TO THE SUPREME BEING.

## III.

[Composed 1805.—Published 1807.]

THE prayers I make will then be sweet  
indeed  
If Thou the spirit give by which I pray:  
My unassisted heart is barren clay,  
That of its native self can nothing feed:  
Of good and pious works Thou art the seed,  
That quickens only where Thou say'st  
it may: 6  
Unless Thou show to us thine own true  
way  
No man can find it: Father! Thou must  
lead.  
Do Thou, then, breathe those thoughts  
into my mind 9  
By which such virtue may in me be bred  
That in thy holy footsteps I may tread;  
The fetters of my tongue do Thou un-  
bind,  
That I may have the power to sing of  
Thee,  
And sound thy praises everlastingly.

## XXVII.

[Composed later than June, 1812.—Published 1815.]

SURPRISED by joy—impatient as the Wind  
I turned to share the transport—Oh! with  
whom

But Thee<sup>1</sup>, deep buried in the silent tomb,  
That spot which no vicissitude can find?  
Love, faithful love, recalled thee to my  
mind— 5  
But how could I forget thee? Through  
what power,  
Even for the least division of an hour,  
Have I been so beguiled as to be blind  
To my most grievous loss!—That thought's  
return 9  
Was the worst pang that sorrow ever  
bore,  
Save one, one only, when I stood for-  
lorn,  
Knowing my heart's best treasure was no  
more;  
That neither present time, nor years un-  
born  
Could to my sight that heavenly face  
restore.

## XXVIII.

## I.

[Composed ?.—Published 1807.]

METHOUGHT I saw the footsteps of a  
throne  
Which mists and vapours from mine eyes  
did shroud—  
Nor view of who might sit thereon al-  
lowed;  
But all the steps and ground about were  
strown  
With sights the ruefullest that flesh and  
bone 5  
Ever put on; a miserable crowd,  
Sick, hale, old, young, who cried before  
that cloud,  
"Thou art our king, O Death! to thee we  
groan."  
Those steps I clomb; the mists before me  
gave  
Smooth way; and I beheld the face of one  
Sleeping alone within a mossy cave, 11  
With her face up to heaven; that seemed  
to have

<sup>1</sup> Catherine, the poet's second daughter, born September 6, 1808, died June 5, 1812. See the poem, *Characteristics of a Child Three Years Old*, page 80.—Ed.

Pleasing remembrance of a thought fore-  
gone ;  
A lovely Beauty in a summer grave !

## XXIX.

NOVEMBER, 1836.

## II.

[Composed November, 1836.—Published 1837.]

EVEN so for me a Vision sanctified  
The sway of Death ; long ere mine eyes  
had seen  
Thy countenance—the still rapture of thy  
mien—  
When thou, dear Sister ! wert become  
Death's Bride :  
No trace of pain or languor could abide  
That change :—age on thy brow was  
smoothed—thy cold  
Wan cheek at once was privileged to  
unfold  
A loveliness to living youth denied.  
Oh ! if within me hope should e'er decline,  
The lamp of faith, lost Friend ! too faintly  
burn ;  
Then may that heaven-revealing smile of  
thine,  
The bright assurance, visibly return :  
And let my spirit in that power divine  
Rejoice, as, through that power, it ceased  
to mourn.

## XXX.

[Composed August, 1802.—Published 1807.]

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,  
The holy time is quiet as a Nun  
Breathless with adoration ; the broad sun  
Is sinking down in its tranquillity ;  
The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the  
Sea :  
Listen ! the mighty Being is awake,  
And doth with his eternal motion make  
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.  
Dear Child ! dear Girl ! that walkest with  
me here,  
If thou appear untouched by solemn  
thought,  
Thy nature is not therefore less divine :  
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the  
year ;

And worshipp'st at the Temple's inner  
shrine,  
God being with thee when we know it not.

## XXXI.

[Composed ?.—Published 1807.]

WHERE lies the Land to which yon Ship  
must go ?  
Fresh as a lark mounting at break of day,  
Festively she puts forth in trim array ;  
Is she for tropic suns, or polar snow ?  
What boots the enquiry ?—Neither friend  
nor foe  
She cares for ; let her travel where she  
may,  
She finds familiar names, a beaten way  
Ever before her, and a wind to blow.  
Yet still I ask, what haven is her mark ?  
And, almost as it was when ships were  
rare,  
(From time to time, like Pilgrims, here  
and there  
Crossing the waters) doubt, and some-  
thing dark,  
Of the old Sea some reverential fear,  
Is with me at thy farewell, joyous Bark !

## XXXII.

[Composed ?.—Published 1807.]

WITH Ships the sea was sprinkled far  
and nigh,  
Like stars in heaven, and joyously it  
showed ;  
Some lying fast at anchor in the road,  
Some veering up and down, one knew  
not why.  
A goodly Vessel did I then espy  
Come like a giant from a haven broad ;  
And lustily along the bay she strode,  
Her tackling rich, and of apparel high.  
This Ship was nought to me, nor I to her,  
Yet I pursued her with a Lover's look ;  
This Ship to all the rest did I prefer :  
When will she turn, and whither ? She  
will brook  
No tarrying ; where She comes the winds  
must stir :  
On went She, and due north her journey  
took.

## XXXIII.

[Composed ?.—Published 1807.]

THE world is too much with us; late and soon,  
 Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:  
 Little we see in Nature that is ours;  
 We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!  
 This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon;  
 The winds that will be howling at all hours,  
 And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;  
 For this, for everything, we are out of tune;  
 It moves us not.—Great God! I'd rather be  
 A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;  
 So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,  
 Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;  
 Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;  
 Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn.

## XXXIV.

[Composed ?.—Published 1823 (Joanna Baillie's *Poetic Miscellanies*); ed. 1827.]

A VOLANT Tribe of Bards on earth are found,  
 Who, while the flattering Zephyrs round them play,  
 On "coignes of vantage" hang their nests of clay;  
 How quickly from that airy hold unbound,  
 Dust for oblivion! To the solid ground  
 Of nature trusts the Mind that builds for aye;  
 Convinced that there, there only, she can lay  
 Secure foundations. As the year runs round,  
 Apart she toils within the chosen ring;  
 While the stars shine, or while day's purple eye  
 Is gently closing with the flowers of spring;

Where even the motion of an Angel's wing  
 Would interrupt the intense tranquillity  
 Of silent hills, and more than silent sky.

## XXXV.

[Composed probably 1815.—Published 1815.]

"WEAK is the will of Man, his judgment blind;  
 Remembrance persecutes, and Hope betrays;  
 Heavy is woe;—and joy, for human-kind,  
 A mournful thing, so transient is the blaze!"  
 Thus might he paint our lot of mortal days  
 Who wants the glorious faculty assigned  
 To elevate the more-than-reasoning Mind,  
 And colour life's dark cloud with orient rays.  
 Imagination is that sacred power,  
 Imagination lofty and refined:  
 'Tis hers to pluck the amaranthine flower  
 Of Faith, and round the sufferer's temples bind  
 Wreaths that endure affliction's heaviest shower,  
 And do not shrink from sorrow's keenest wind.

## XXXVI.

TO THE MEMORY OF RAISLEY CALVERT.

[Composed ?.—Published 1807.]

CALVERT! it must not be unheard by them  
 Who may respect my name that I to thee  
 Owed many years of early liberty.  
 This care was thine when sickness did condemn  
 Thy youth to hopeless wasting, root and stem—  
 That I, if frugal and severe, might stray  
 Where'er I liked; and finally array  
 My temples with the Muse's diadem.  
 Hence, if in freedom I have loved the truth;  
 If there be aught of pure, or good, or great,  
 In my past verse; or shall be, in the lays  
 Of higher mood, which now I meditate;—

It gladdens me, O worthy, short-lived,  
Youth!  
To think how much of this will be thy  
praise.

## PART II.

## I.

[Composed ?.—Published 1827.]

SCORN not the Sonnet; Critic, you have  
frowned,  
Mindless of its just honours; with this  
key  
Shakspeare unlocked his heart; the  
melody  
Of this small lute gave ease to Petrarch's  
wound;  
A thousand times this pipe did Tasso  
sound; 5  
With it Camœns soothed an exile's grief;  
The Sonnet glittered a gay myrtle leaf  
Amid the cypress with which Dante  
crowned  
His visionary brow: a glow-worm lamp,  
It cheered mild Spenser, called from  
Faery-land 10  
To struggle through dark ways; and  
when a damp  
Fell round the path of Milton, in his  
hand  
The Thing became a trumpet; whence he  
blew  
Soul-animating strains—alas, too few!

## II.

[Composed December 1806.—Published 1807.]

How sweet it is, when mother Fancy  
rocks  
The wayward brain, to saunter through a  
wood!  
An old place, full of many a lovely brood,  
Tall trees, green arbours, and ground-  
flowers in flocks;  
And wild rose tip-toe upon hawthorn  
stocks, 5  
Like a bold Girl, who plays her agile  
pranks  
At Wakes and Fairs with wandering  
Mountebanks,—  
When she stands cresting the Clown's  
head, and mocks  
The crowd beneath her. Verily I think,

Such place to me is sometimes like a  
dream 10  
Or map of the whole world: thoughts,  
link by link,  
Enter through ears and eyesight, with  
such gleam  
Of all things, that at last in fear I shrink,  
And leap at once from the delicious  
stream.

## III.

TO B. R. HAYDON.

[Composed December 1815.—Published February  
4, 1816 (*The Champion*); March 31, 1816 (*The  
Examiner*); vol. of 1816.]

HIGH is our calling, Friend!—Creative  
Art  
(Whether the instrument of words she  
use,  
Or pencil pregnant with ethereal hues,)  
Demands the service of a mind and heart,  
Though sensitive, yet, in their weakest  
part, 5  
Heroically fashioned—to infuse  
Faith in the whispers of the lonely Muse,  
While the whole world seems adverse to  
desert.  
And, oh! when Nature sinks, as oft she  
may,  
Through long-lived pressure of obscure  
distress, 10  
Still to be strenuous for the bright re-  
ward,  
And in the soul admit of no decay,  
Brook no continuance of weak-minded-  
ness—  
Great is the glory, for the strife is hard!

## IV.

[Composed 1814.—Published 1815.]

FROM the dark chambers of dejection  
freed,  
Spurning the unprofitable yoke of care,  
Rise, GILLIES, rise: the gales of youth  
shall bear  
Thy genius forward like a winged steed.  
Though bold Bellerophon (so Jove de-  
creed 5  
In wrath) fell headlong from the fields of  
air,

Yet a rich guerdon waits on minds that dare,  
 If aught be in them of immortal seed,  
 And reason govern that audacious flight  
 Which heavenward they direct.—Then  
     droop not thou, 10  
 Erroneously renewing a sad vow  
 In the low dell 'mid Roslin's faded grove:  
 A cheerful life is what the Muses love,  
 A soaring spirit is their prime delight.

## V.

[Composed ?.—Published 1827.]

FAIR Prime of life! were it enough to gild  
 With ready sunbeams every straggling  
     shower;  
 And, if an unexpected cloud should lower,  
 Swiftly thereon a rainbow arch to build  
 For Fancy's errands,—then, from fields  
     half-tilled 5  
 Gathering green weeds to mix with poppy  
     flower,  
 Thee might thy Minions crown, and chant  
     thy power,  
 Unpitied by the wise, all censure stilled.  
 Ah! show that worthier honours are thy  
     due;  
 Fair Prime of life! arouse the deeper  
     heart; 10  
 Confirm the Spirit glorying to pursue  
 Some path of steep ascent and lofty aim;  
 And, if there be a joy that slights the  
     claim  
 Of grateful memory, bid that joy depart.

## VI.

[Composed ?.—Published 1819.]

I WATCH, and long have watched, with  
     calm regret  
 Yon slowly-sinking star—immortal Sire  
 (So might he seem) of all the glittering  
     quire!  
 Blue ether still surrounds him—yet—and  
     yet;  
 But now the horizon's rocky parapet 5  
 Is reached, where, forfeiting his bright  
     attire,  
 He burns—transmuted to a dusky fire—  
 Then pays submissively the appointed  
     debt

To the flying moments, and is seen no  
     more.  
 Angels and gods! We struggle with our  
     fate, 10  
 While health, power, glory, from their  
     height decline,  
 Depressed; and then extinguished: and  
     our state,  
 In this, how different, lost Star, from  
     thine,  
 That no to-morrow shall our beams re-  
     store!

## VII.

[Composed ?.—Published 1819.]

I HEARD (alas! 'twas only in a dream)  
 Strains—which, as sage Antiquity be-  
     lieved,  
 By waking ears have sometimes been  
     received  
 Wafted adown the wind from lake or  
     stream;  
 A most melodious requiem, a supreme 5  
 And perfect harmony of notes, achieved  
 By a fair Swan on drowsy billows heaved,  
 O'er which her pinions shed a silver gleam.  
 For is she not the votary of Apollo?  
 And knows she not, singing as he in-  
     spires, 10  
 That bliss awaits her which the ungenial  
     Hollow<sup>1</sup>  
 Of the dull earth partakes not, nor de-  
     sires?  
 Mount, tuneful Bird, and join the im-  
     mortal quires!  
 She soared—and I awoke, struggling in  
     vain to follow.

## VIII.

## RETIREMENT.

[Composed ?.—Published 1827.]

If the whole weight of what we think and  
     feel,  
 Save only far as thought and feeling  
     blend  
 With action, were as nothing, patriot  
     Friend!

<sup>1</sup> See the "Phædo" of Plato, by which this Sonnet was suggested.

From thy remonstrance would be no  
appeal;  
But to promote and fortify the weal 5  
Of her own Being is her paramount end;  
A truth which they alone shall comprehend  
Who shun the mischief which they cannot  
heal.  
Peace in these feverish times is sovereign  
bliss:  
Here, with no thirst but what the stream  
can slake, 10  
And startled only by the rustling brake,  
Cool air I breathe; while the unincum-  
bered Mind,  
By some weak aims at services assigned  
To gentle Natures, thanks not Heaven  
amiss.

## IX.

[Composed ?.—Published 1828 (Joanna Baillie's  
*Poetic Miscellanies*); ed. 1827.]

NOT Love, not War, nor the tumultuous  
swell  
Of civil conflict, nor the wrecks of change,  
Nor Duty struggling with afflictions  
strange—  
Not these *alone* inspire the tuneful shell;  
But where untroubled peace and concord  
dwell, 5  
There also is the Muse not loth to range,  
Watching the twilight smoke of cot or  
grange,  
Skyward ascending from a woody dell.  
Meek aspirations please her, lone endea-  
vour,  
And sage content, and placid melancholy;  
She loves to gaze upon a crystal river—11  
Diaphanous because it travels slowly;  
Soft is the music that would charm for  
ever;  
The flower of sweetest smell is shy and  
lowly.

## X.

[Composed ?.—Published 1815.]

MARK the concentrated hazels that en-  
close  
Yon old grey Stone, protected from the  
ray

Of noontide suns:—and even the beams  
that play  
And glance, while wantonly the rough  
wind blows,  
Are seldom free to touch the moss that  
grows 5  
Upon that roof, amid embowering gloom,  
The very image framing of a Tomb,  
In which some ancient Chieftain finds  
repose  
Among the lonely mountains.—Live, ye  
trees!  
And thou, grey Stone, the pensive like-  
ness keep 10  
Of a dark chamber where the Mighty  
sleep:  
For more than Fancy to the influence  
bends  
When solitary Nature condescends  
To mimic Time's forlorn humanities.

## XI.

COMPOSED AFTER A JOURNEY ACROSS THE  
HAMBLETON HILLS, YORKSHIRE.

[Composed October 4, 1802.—Published 1807.]

DARK and more dark the shades of even-  
ing fell;  
The wished-for point was reached—but at  
an hour  
When little could be gained from that  
rich dower  
Of prospect, whereof many thousands  
tell.  
Yet did the glowing west with marvellous  
power 5  
Salute us; there stood Indian citadel,  
Temple of Greece, and minster with its  
tower  
Substantially expressed—a place for bell  
Or clock to toll from! Many a tempting  
isle,  
With groves that never were imagined,  
lay  
'Mid seas how steadfast! objects all for  
the eye 11  
Of silent rapture; but we felt the while  
We should forget them; they are of the  
sky,  
And from our earthly memory fade away.

XII.

[Composed ?.—Published 1807.]

— “they are of the sky,  
And from our earthly memory fade away.”

THOSE words were uttered as in pensive  
mood

We turned, departing from that solemn  
sight:

A contrast and reproach to gross delight,  
And life's unspiritual pleasures daily  
wooded!

But now upon this thought I cannot  
brood; 5

It is unstable as a dream of night;  
Nor will I praise a cloud, however bright,  
Disparaging Man's gifts, and proper food.  
Grove, isle, with every shape of sky-built  
dome,

Though clad in colours beautiful and  
pure, 10

Find in the heart of man no natural  
home:

The immortal Mind craves objects that  
endure:

These cleave to it; from these it cannot  
roam,

Nor they from it: their fellowship is  
secure.

XIII.

SEPTEMBER, 1815.

[Composed December, 1815.—Published February  
11, 1816 (*The Examiner*); vol. of 1816.]

WHILE not a leaf seems faded; while the  
fields,

With ripening harvest prodigally fair,  
In brightest sunshine bask; this nipping  
air,

Sent from some distant clime where  
Winter wilds

His icy scimitar, a foretaste yields 5  
Of bitter change, and bids the flowers  
beware;

And whispers to the silent birds, “Pre-  
pare

Against the threatening foe your trustiest  
shields.”

For me, who under kindlier laws belong

To Nature's tuneful quire, this rustling dry  
Through leaves yet green, and yon crystal-  
line sky, 11

Announce a season potent to renew,  
Mid frost and snow, the instinctive joys  
of song,

And nobler cares than listless summer  
knew.

XIV.

NOVEMBER I.

[Composed December, 1815.—Published January  
28, 1816 (*The Examiner*); vol. of 1816.]

How clear, how keen, how marvellously  
bright

The effluence from yon distant mountain's  
head,

Which, strewn with snow smooth as the  
sky can shed,

Shines like another sun—on mortal sight  
Uprisen, as if to check approaching Night,

And all her twinkling stars. Who now  
would tread, 6

If so he might, yon mountain's glittering  
head—

Terrestrial, but a surface, by the flight  
Of sad mortality's earth-sullying wing,

Unswapt, unstained? Nor shall the aerial  
Powers 10

Dissolve that beauty, destined to endure,  
White, radiant, spotless, exquisitely pure,

Through all vicissitudes, till genial Spring  
Has filled the laughing vales with wel-  
come flowers.

XV.

COMPOSED DURING A STORM.

[Composed February, 1819.—Published in *Peter  
Bell* vol., 1819.]

ONE who was suffering tumult in his soul  
Yet failed to seek the sure relief of prayer,

Went forth—his course surrendering to  
the care

Of the fierce wind, while mid-day light-  
nings prowled

Insidiously, untimely thunders growl; 5  
While trees, dim-seen, in frenzied num-  
bers, tear

The lingering remnant of their yellow hair,

And shivering wolves, surprised with  
 . darkness, howl  
 As if the sun were not. He raised his eye  
 Soul-smitten; for, that instant did appear  
 Large space ('mid dreadful clouds) of  
 purest sky, 11  
 An azure disc—shield of Tranquillity;  
 Invisible, unlooked-for, minister  
 Of providential goodness ever nigh!

## XVI.

TO A SNOWDROP.

[Composed ?.—Published 1819.]

LONE Flower, hemmed in with snows,  
 and white as they  
 But harder far, once more I see thee bend  
 Thy forehead as if fearful to offend,  
 Like an unbidden guest. Though day  
 by day  
 Storms, sallying from the mountain-tops,  
 waylay 5  
 The rising sun, and on the plains descend;  
 Yet art thou welcome, welcome as a  
 friend  
 Whose zeal outruns his promise! Blue-  
 eyed May  
 Shall soon behold this border thickly set  
 With bright jonquils, their odours lavish-  
 ing 10  
 On the soft west-wind and his frolic  
 peers;  
 Nor will I then thy modest grace forget,  
 Chaste Snowdrop, venturous harbinger  
 of Spring,  
 And pensive monitor of fleeting years!

## XVII.

TO THE LADY MARY LOWTHER.

With a selection from the Poems of Anne, Countess of Winchilsea; and extracts of similar character from other Writers; transcribed by a female friend.

[Composed ?.—Published 1820.]

LADY! I rifled a Parnassian Cave  
 (But seldom trod) of mildly-gleaming ore;  
 And culled, from sundry beds a lucid  
 store

Of genuine crystals, pure as those that  
 pave  
 The azure brooks, where Dian joys to  
 lave 5  
 Her spotless limbs; and ventured to  
 explore  
 Dim shades—for reliques, upon Lethe's  
 shore,  
 Cast up at random by the sullen wave.  
 To female hands the treasures were re-  
 signed;  
 And lo this Work!—a grotto bright and  
 clear 10  
 From stain or taint; in which thy blame-  
 less mind  
 May feed on thoughts though pensive not  
 austere;  
 Or, if thy deeper spirit be inclined  
 To holy musing, it may enter here.

## XVIII.

TO LADY BEAUMONT.

[Composed January or February, 1807.—Published 1807.]

LADY! the songs of Spring were in the  
 grove  
 While I was shaping beds for winter  
 flowers;  
 While I was planting green unfading  
 bowers,  
 And shrubs—to hang upon the warm  
 alcove,  
 And sheltering wall; and still, as Fancy  
 wove 5  
 The dream, to time and nature's blended  
 powers  
 I gave this paradise for winter hours,  
 A labyrinth, Lady! which your feet shall  
 rove.  
 Yes! when the sun of life more feebly  
 shines,  
 Becoming thoughts, I trust, of solemn  
 gloom 10  
 Or of high gladness you shall hither  
 bring;  
 And these perennial bowers and murmur-  
 ing pines  
 Be gracious as the music and the bloom  
 And all the mighty ravishment of spring.

## XIX.

[Composed ?.—Published 1827.]

*THERE is a pleasure in poetic pains*  
*Which only Poets know*;—'t was rightly  
 said;  
 Whom could the Muses else allure to  
 tread  
 Their smoothest paths, to wear their  
 lightest chains?  
 When happiest Fancy has inspired the  
 strains, 5  
 How oft the malice of one luckless word  
 Pursues the Enthusiast to the social  
 board,  
 Haunts him belated on the silent plains!  
 Yet he repines not, if his thought stand  
 clear,  
 At last, of hindrance and obscurity, 10  
 Fresh as the star that crowns the brow of  
 morn;  
 Bright, speckless, as a softly-moulded tear  
 The moment it has left the virgin's eye,  
 Or rain-drop lingering on the pointed  
 thorn.

## XX.

[Composed ?.—Published 1815.]

THE Shepherd, looking eastward, softly  
 said,  
 "Bright is thy veil, O Moon, as thou art  
 bright!"  
 Forthwith that little cloud, in ether  
 spread  
 And penetrated all with tender light,  
 She cast away, and showed her fulgent  
 head 5  
 Uncovered; dazzling the Beholder's sight  
 As if to vindicate her beauty's right,  
 Her beauty thoughtlessly disparaged.  
 Meanwhile that veil, removed or thrown  
 aside,  
 Went floating from her, darkening as it  
 went; 10  
 And a huge mass, to bury or to hide,  
 Approached this glory of the firmament;  
 Who meekly yields, and is obscured—  
 content  
 With one calm triumph of a modest  
 pride.

## XXI.

[Composed not later than 1819.—Published 1820.]

WHEN haughty expectations prostrate lie,  
 And grandeur crouches like a guilty  
 thing,  
 Oft shall the lowly weak, till nature bring  
 Mature release, in fair society  
 Survive, and Fortune's utmost anger  
 try; 5  
 Like these frail snowdrops that together  
 cling,  
 And nod their helmets, smitten by the  
 wing  
 Of many a furious whirl-blast sweeping by.  
 Observe the faithful flowers! if small to  
 great  
 May lead the thoughts, thus struggling  
 used to stand 10  
 The Emathian phalanx, nobly obstinate;  
 And so the bright immortal Theban band,  
 Whom onset, fiercely urged at Jove's  
 command,  
 Might overwhelm, but could not separate!

## XXII.

[Composed ?.—Published 1815.]

HAIL, Twilight, sovereign of one peaceful  
 hour!  
 Not dull art Thou as undiscerning Night;  
 But studious only to remove from sight  
 Day's mutable distinctions.—Ancient  
 Power!  
 Thus did the waters gleam, the moun-  
 tains lower, 5  
 To the rude Briton, when, in wolf-skin vest  
 Here roving wild, he laid him down to  
 rest  
 On the bare rock, or through a leafy  
 bower  
 Looked ere his eyes were closed. By him  
 was seen  
 The self-same Vision which we now behold,  
 At thy meek bidding, shadowy Power!  
 brought forth; 11  
 These mighty barriers, and the gulf be-  
 tween;  
 The flood, the stars,—a spectacle as old  
 As the beginning of the heavens and  
 earth!

XXIII<sup>1</sup>.

[Composed perhaps 1802.—Published 1807.]

WITH how sad steps, O Moon, thou  
 climb'st the sky,  
 "How silently, and with how wan a  
 face!"  
 Where art thou? Thou so often seen on  
 high  
 Running among the clouds a Wood-  
 nymph's race!  
 Unhappy Nuns, whose common breath's  
 a sigh  
 Which they would stifle, move at such a  
 pace!  
 The northern Wind, to call thee to the  
 chase,  
 Must blow to-night his bugle horn. Had I  
 The power of Merlin, Goddess! this  
 should be:  
 And all the stars, fast as the clouds were  
 riven,  
 Should sally forth, to keep thee company,  
 Hurrying and sparkling through the clear  
 blue heaven;  
 But, Cynthia! should to thee the palm  
 be given,  
 Queen both for beauty and for majesty.

## XXIV.

[Composed ?.—Published 1815.]

EVEN as a dragon's eye that feels the  
 stress  
 Of a bedimmed sleep, or as a lamp  
 Sullenly<sup>2</sup> glaring through sepulchral  
 damp,  
 So burns yon Taper 'mid a black recess

<sup>1</sup> This poem originally consisted of fifteen lines: it was shortened and classed as a Sonnet in ed. 1820. See *Supplement*, page 629.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> The collective edd. of the Poems from 1827 to 1849 read "suddenly"; edd. 1815, 1820, and the Sonnet-vol. of 1838 read "sullenly." The latter is undoubtedly the word intended by Wordsworth. Cf. "sullen fire," *Misc. Son. II. vi. l. 7* (edd. 1819, 1820, 1827); "sullen star," *Excursion IV. 487*; and the "sullen light," i.e. the faintly glowing wick of an extinguished candle, spoken of in Wordsworth's reply to the letter of *Mathetes* (*The Friend*, iii. 48, ed. 1818).—Ed.

Of mountains, silent, dreary, motionless:  
 The lake below reflects it not; the sky  
 Muffled in clouds, affords no company  
 To mitigate and cheer its loneliness.  
 Yet, round the body of that joyless Thing  
 Which sends so far its melancholy light,  
 Perhaps are seated in domestic ring  
 A gay society with faces bright,  
 Conversing, reading, laughing;—or they  
 sing,  
 While hearts and voices in the song unite.

## XXV.

[Composed ?.—Published 1820.]

THE stars are mansions built by Nature's  
 hand,  
 And, haply, there the spirits of the blest  
 Dwell, clothed in radiance, their im-  
 mortal vest;  
 Huge Ocean shows, within his yellow  
 strand,  
 A habitation marvellously planned,  
 For life to occupy in love and rest;  
 All that we see—is dome, or vault, or  
 nest,  
 Or fortress, reared at Nature's sage com-  
 mand.  
 Glad thought for every season! but the  
 Spring  
 Gave it while cares were weighing on my  
 heart,  
 'Mid song of birds, and insects murmur-  
 ing;  
 And while the youthful year's prolific  
 art—  
 Of bud, leaf, blade, and flower—was  
 fashioning  
 Abodes where self-disturbance hath no  
 part.

## XXVI.

[Composed ?.—Published 1835.]

DESponding Father! mark this altered  
 bough,  
 So beautiful of late, with sunshine  
 warmed,  
 Or moist with dews; what more un-  
 sightly now,  
 Its blossoms shrivelled, and its fruit, if  
 formed,

Invisible? yet Spring her genial brow 5  
 Knits not o'er that discolouring and decay  
 As false to expectation. Nor fret thou  
 At like unlovely process in the May  
 Of human life: a Stripling's graces blow,  
 Fade and are shed, that from their timely  
 fall 10  
 (Misdeem it not a cankerous change) may  
 grow  
 Rich mellow bearings, that for thanks  
 shall call:  
 In all men, sinful is it to be slow  
 To hope—in Parents, sinful above all.

## XXVII.

CAPTIVITY.—MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

[Composed ?.—Published 1819.]

"As the cold aspect of a sunless way  
 Strikes through the Traveller's frame  
 with deadlier chill,  
 Oft as appears a grove, or obvious hill,  
 Glistening with unparticipated ray,  
 Or shining slope where he must never  
 stray; 5  
 So joys, remembered without wish or will,  
 Sharpen the keenest edge of present  
 ill,—  
 On the crushed heart a heavier burthen  
 lay.  
 Just Heaven, contract the compass of  
 my mind  
 To fit proportion with my altered state!  
 Quench those felicities whose light I find  
 Reflected in my bosom all too late!— 12  
 O be my spirit, like my thralldom, strait;  
 And, like mine eyes that stream with  
 sorrow, blind!"

## XXVIII.

ST. CATHERINE OF LEDBURY.

[Composed ?.—Published 1835.]

WHEN human touch (as monkish books  
 attest)  
 Nor was applied nor could be, Ledbury  
 bells  
 Broke forth in concert flung adown the  
 dells,

And upward, high as Malvern's cloudy  
 crest;  
 Sweet tones, and caught by a noble Lady  
 blest 5  
 To rapture! Mabel listened at the side  
 Of her loved mistress: soon the music  
 died,  
 And Catherine said, *Hætt I sett up my  
 rest.*  
 Warned in a dream, the Wanderer long  
 had sought  
 A home that by such miracle of sound 10  
 Must be revealed:—she heard it now,  
 or felt  
 The deep, deep joy of a confiding  
 thought;  
 And there, a saintly Anchoress, she  
 dwelt  
 Till she exchanged for heaven that happy  
 ground.

## XXIX.

[Composed probably 1807.—Published 1807.]

— "gives to airy nothing  
 A local habitation and a name."

THOUGH narrow be that old Man's cares,  
 and near,  
 The poor old Man is greater than he  
 seems:  
 For he hath waking empire, wide as  
 dreams;  
 An ample sovereignty of eye and ear.  
 Rich are his walks with supernatural  
 cheer; 5  
 The region of his inner spirit teems  
 With vital sounds and monitory gleams  
 Of high astonishment and pleasing fear.  
 He the seven birds hath seen, that never  
 part,  
 Seen the SEVEN WHISTLERS in their  
 nightly rounds, 10  
 And counted them; and oftentimes will  
 start—  
 For overhead are sweeping GABRIEL'S  
 HOUNDS  
 Doomed, with their impious Lord, the  
 flying Hart  
 To chase for ever, on aerial grounds!

## XXX.

[Composed ?.—Published 1835.]

FOUR fiery steeds impatient of the rein  
 Whirled us o'er sunless ground beneath  
 a sky  
 As void of sunshine, when, from that  
 wide plain,  
 Clear tops of far-off mountains we descried,  
 Like a Sierra of cerulean Spain, 5  
 All light and lustre. Did no heart reply?  
 Yes, there was One;—for One, asunder  
 fly  
 The thousand links of that ethereal chain;  
 And green vales open out, with grove and  
 field,  
 And the fair front of many a happy  
 Home; 10  
 Such tempting spots as into vision come  
 While Soldiers, weary of the arms they  
 wield,  
 And sick at heart of strife-furled Christendom,  
 Gaze on the moon by parting clouds re-  
 vealed.

## XXXI.

[Composed 1806.—Published 1815.]

BROOK! whose society the Poet seeks,  
 Intent his wasted spirits to renew;  
 And whom the curious Painter doth  
 pursue  
 Through rocky passes, among flowery  
 creeks,  
 And tracks thee dancing down thy water-  
 breaks; 5  
 If wish were mine some type of thee to  
 view,  
 Thee, and not thee thyself, I would not do  
 Like Grecian Artists, give thee human  
 cheeks,  
 Channels for tears; no Naiad shouldst  
 thou be,—  
 Have neither limbs, feet, feathers, joints,  
 nor hairs: 10  
 It seems the Eternal Soul is clothed in  
 thee  
 With purer robes than those of flesh and  
 blood,  
 And hath bestowed on thee a safer good;  
 Unwearied joy, and life without its cares.

## XXXII.

COMPOSED ON THE BANKS OF A ROCKY  
STREAM.

[Composed ?.—Published 1820.]

DOGMATIC Teachers, of the snow-white  
 fur!  
 Ye wrangling Schoolmen, of the scarlet  
 hood!  
 Who, with a keenness not to be with-  
 stood,  
 Press the point home, or falter and  
 demur,  
 Checked in your course by many a teas-  
 ing burr; 5  
 These natural council-seats your acrid  
 blood  
 Might cool;—and, as the Genius of the  
 flood  
 Stoops willingly to animate and spur  
 Each lighter function slumbering in the  
 brain,  
 Yon eddying balls of foam, these arrowy  
 gleams 10  
 That o'er the pavement of the surging  
 streams  
 Welter and flash, a synod might detain  
 With subtle speculations, haply vain,  
 But surely less so than your far-fetched  
 themes!

## XXXIII.

THIS AND THE TWO FOLLOWING WERE  
SUGGESTED BY MR. W. WESTALL'S VIEWS  
OF THE CAVES, ETC., IN YORKSHIRE.[Composed 1818.—Published January, 1819 (*Black-  
wood's Magazine*); *Peter Bell* vol., 1819.]

PURE element of waters! wheresoe'er  
 Thou dost forsake thy subterranean  
 haunts,  
 Green herbs, bright flowers, and berry-  
 bearing plants,  
 Rise into life and in thy train appear:  
 And, through the sunny portion of the year,  
 Swift insects shine, thy hovering pursui-  
 vants: 6  
 And, if thy bounty fail, the forest pants;  
 And hart and hind and hunter with his  
 spear  
 Languish and droop together. Nor unfelt

In man's perturbed soul thy sway benign;  
And, haply, far within the marble belt  
Of central earth, where tortured Spirits pine  
For grace and goodness lost, thy murmurs melt  
Their anguish,—and they blend sweet songs with thine<sup>1</sup>.

## XXXIV.

MALHAM COVE.

[Composed 1818.—Published January 1819 (*Blackwood's Magazine*); *Peter Bell* vol., 1819.]

WAS the aim frustrated by force or guile,  
When giants scooped from out the rocky ground,  
Tier under tier, this semicirque profound?  
(Giants—the same who built in Erin's isle  
That Causeway with incomparable toil!)—  
Oh, had this vast theatric structure wound  
With finished sweep into a perfect round,  
No mightier work had gained the plausive smile  
Of all-beholding Phœbus! But, alas,  
Vain earth! false world! Foundations  
must be laid 10  
In Heaven; for, 'mid the wreck of is and  
was,  
Things incomplete and purposes betrayed  
Make sadder transits o'er thought's optic  
glass  
Than noblest objects utterly decayed.

## XXXV.

GORDALE.

[Composed 1818.—Published January, 1819 (*Blackwood's Magazine*); *Peter Bell* vol., 1819.]

At early dawn, or rather when the air  
Glimmers with fading light, and shadowy  
Eve  
Is busiest to confer and to bereave;  
Then, pensive Votary! let thy feet repair  
To Gordale-chasm, terrific as the lair 5  
Where the young lions couch; for so, by  
leave

<sup>1</sup> Waters (as Mr. Westall informs us in the letterpress prefixed to his admirable views) are invariably found to flow through these caverns.

Of the propitious hour, thou may'st perceive  
The local Deity, with oozy hair  
And mineral crown, beside his jagged  
urn,  
Recumbent: Him thou may'st behold,  
who hides 10  
His lineaments by day, yet there presides,  
Teaching the docile waters how to turn,  
Or (if need be) impediment to spurn,  
And force their passage to the salt-sea  
tides!

## XXXVI.

COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE,  
SEPTEMBER 3, 1802.

[Composed July 31, 1802.—Published 1807.]

EARTH has not anything to show more  
fair:  
Dull would he be of soul who could  
pass by  
A sight so touching in its majesty:  
This City now doth, like a garment, wear  
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,  
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples  
lie 6  
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;  
All bright and glittering in the smokeless  
air.  
Never did sun more beautifully steep  
In his first splendour, valley, rock, or  
hill;  
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!  
The river glideth at his own sweet will:  
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;  
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

## XXXVII.

## CONCLUSION.

TO —

[Composed probably 1827.—Published 1827.]

If these brief Records, by the Muses' art  
Produced as lonely Nature or the strife  
That animates the scenes of public life<sup>2</sup>  
Inspired, may in thy leisure claim a part;  
And if these Transcripts of the private  
heart 5

<sup>2</sup> This line alludes to Sonnets which will be found in another Class.

Have gained a sanction from thy falling  
tears;  
Then I repent not. But my soul hath fears  
Breathed from eternity; for, as a dart  
Cleaves the blank air, Life flies: now  
every day  
Is but a glimmering spoke in the swift  
wheel 10  
Of the revolving week. Away, away,  
All fitful cares, all transitory zeal!  
So timely Grace the immortal wing may  
heal,  
And honour rest upon the senseless clay.

## PART III.

## I.

[Composed ?.—Published 1842.]

THOUGH the bold wings of Poesy affect  
The clouds, and wheel around the moun-  
tain tops  
Rejoicing, from her loftiest height she  
drops  
Well pleased to skim the plain with wild  
flowers deckt,  
Or muse in solemn grove whose shades  
protect 5  
The lingering dew—there steals along, or  
stops  
Watching the least small bird that round  
her hops,  
Or creeping worm, with sensitive respect.  
Her functions are they therefore less  
divine,  
Her thoughts less deep, or void of grave  
intent 10  
Her simplest fancies? Should that fear  
be thine,  
Aspiring Votary, ere thy hand present  
One offering, kneel before her modest  
shrine,  
With brow in penitential sorrow bent!

## II.

OXFORD, MAY 30, 1820.

[Composed 1820.—Published 1820.]

YE sacred Nurseries of blooming Youth!  
In whose collegiate shelter England's  
Flowers  
Expand, enjoying through their vernal  
hours

The air of liberty, the light of truth;  
Much have ye suffered from Time's gnaw-  
ing tooth:  
Yet, O ye spires of Oxford! domes and<sup>5</sup>  
towers!  
Gardens and groves! your presence over-  
powers  
The soberness of reason; till, in sooth,  
Transformed, and rushing on a bold  
exchange 9  
I slight my own beloved Cam, to range  
Where silver Isis leads my stripling feet;  
Pace the long avenue, or glide adown  
The stream-like windings of that glorious  
street—  
An eager Novice robed in fluttering gown!

## III.

OXFORD, MAY 30, 1820.

[Composed 1820.—Published 1820.]

SHAME on this faithless heart! that could  
allow  
Such transport, though but for a mo-  
ment's space;  
Not while—to aid the spirit of the place—  
The crescent moon clove with its glitter-  
ing prow  
The clouds, or night-bird sang from shady  
bough; 5  
But in plain daylight:—She, too, at my  
side,  
Who, with her heart's experience satisfied,  
Maintains inviolate its slightest vow!  
Sweet Fancy! other gifts must I receive;  
Proofs of a higher sovereignty I claim; 10  
Take from *her* brow the withering flowers  
of eve,  
And to that brow life's morning wreath  
restore;  
Let *her* be comprehended in the frame  
Of these illusions, or they please no more.

## IV.

RECOLLECTION OF THE PORTRAIT OF KING  
HENRY THE EIGHTH, TRINITY LODGE,  
CAMBRIDGE.

[Composed ?.—Published 1827.]

THE imperial Stature, the colossal stride,  
Are yet before me; yet do I behold  
The broad full visage, chest of amplest  
mould,

The vestments 'broidered with barbaric  
pride:  
And lo! a poniard, at the Monarch's  
side, 5  
Hangs ready to be grasped in sympathy  
With the keen threatenings of that ful-  
gent eye,  
Below the white-rimmed bonnet, far-  
descried.  
Who trembles now at thy capricious  
mood?  
'Mid those surrounding Worthies, haughty  
King, 10  
We rather think, with grateful mind  
sedate,  
How Providence educeth, from the spring  
Of lawless will, unlooked-for streams of  
good,  
Which neither force shall check nor time  
abate!

## V.

ON THE DEATH OF HIS MAJESTY (GEORGE  
THE THIRD).

(Composed 1820.—Published 1820.)

WARD of the Law!—dread Shadow of a  
King!  
Whose realm had dwindled to one stately  
room;  
Whose universe was gloom immersed in  
gloom,  
Darkness as thick as life o'er life could  
fling,  
Save haply for some feeble glimmering 5  
Of Faith and Hope—if thou, by nature's  
doom,  
Gently hast sunk into the quiet tomb,  
Why should we bend in grief, to sorrow  
clinging,  
When thankfulness were best?—Fresh-  
flowing tears,  
Or, where tears flow not, sigh succeeding  
sigh, 10  
Yield to such after-thought the sole  
reply  
Which justly it can claim. The Nation  
bears  
In this deep knell, silent for threescore  
years,  
An unexampled voice of awful memory!

## VI.

JUNE, 1820.

[Composed 1820.—Published 1820.]

FAME tells of groves—from England far  
away—  
Groves<sup>1</sup> that inspire the Nightingale to  
trill  
And modulate, with subtle reach of skill  
Elsewhere unmatched, her ever-varying  
lay;  
Such bold report I venture to gainsay: 5  
For I have heard the quire of Richmond  
hill  
Chanting with indefatigable bill,  
Strains that recalled to mind a distant  
day;  
When, haply under shade of that same  
wood,  
And scarcely conscious of the dashing  
oars 10  
Plied steadily between those willowy  
shores,  
The sweet-souled Poet of the Seasons  
stood—  
Listening, and listening long, in raptur-  
ous mood,  
Ye heavenly Birds! to your Progenitors.

## VII.

A PARSONAGE IN OXFORDSHIRE.

[Composed 1820.—Published 1822 (*Ecclesiastical  
Sketches*, note, p. 121); ed. 1827.]

WHERE holy ground begins, unhallowed  
ends,  
Is marked by no distinguishable line;  
The turf unites, the pathways intertwine;  
And, wheresoe'er the stealing footstep  
tends,  
Garden, and that Domain where kindred,  
friends, 5  
And neighbours rest together, here con-  
found  
Their several features, mingled like the  
sound  
Of many waters, or as evening blends  
With shady night. Soft airs, from shrub  
and flower,

<sup>1</sup> Wallachia is the country alluded to.

Waft fragrant greetings to each silent  
grave; 10  
And while those lofty poplars gently wave  
Their tops, between them comes and goes  
a sky  
Bright as the glimpses of eternity,  
To saints accorded in their mortal hour.

## VIII.

COMPOSED AMONG THE RUINS OF A CASTLE  
IN NORTH WALES.

[Composed probably September, 1824.—Published  
1827.]

THROUGH shattered galleries, 'mid roof-  
less halls,  
Wandering with timid footsteps oft be-  
trayed,  
The Stranger sighs, nor scruples to up-  
braid  
Old Time, though he, gentlest among the  
Thralls 4  
Of Destiny, upon these wounds hath laid  
His lenient touches, soft as light that falls,  
From the wan Moon, upon the towers  
and walls,  
Light deepening the profoundest sleep  
of shade.  
Relic of Kings! Wreck of forgotten wars,  
To winds abandoned and the prying stars,  
Time loves Thee! at his call the Seasons  
twine 11  
Luxuriant wreaths around thy forehead  
hoar;  
And, though past pomp no changes can  
restore,  
A soothing recompense, his gift, is thine!

## IX.

TO THE LADY E. B. AND THE HON. MISS P.

[Composed September, 1824.—Published 1827.]

Composed in the Grounds of Plass Newidd, near  
Llangollen, 1824.

A STREAM, to mingle with your favourite  
Dee,  
Along the VALE OF MEDITATION<sup>1</sup> flows;  
So styled by those fierce Britons, pleased  
to see

<sup>1</sup> Glyn Myrfr.

In Nature's face the expression of repose;  
Or haply there some pious hermit chose 5  
To live and die, the peace of heaven his  
aim;  
To whom the wild sequestered region owes,  
At this late day, its sanctifying name.  
GLYN CAFAILLGAROECH, in the Cambrian  
tongue,  
In ours, the VALE OF FRIENDSHIP, let  
this spot 10  
Be named; where, faithful to a low-  
roofed Cot,  
On Deva's banks, ye have abode so long;  
Sisters in love, a love allowed to climb,  
Even on this earth, above the reach of  
Time!

## X.

TO THE TORRENT AT THE DEVIL'S BRIDGE,  
NORTH WALES, 1824.

[Composed September, 1824.—Published 1827.]

How art thou named? In search of what  
strange land,  
From what huge height, descending?  
Can such force  
Of waters issue from a British source,  
Or hath not Pindus fed thee, where the band  
Of Patriots scoop their freedom out, with  
hand 5  
Desperate as thine? Or come the in-  
cessant shocks  
From that young Stream, that smites the  
throbbing rocks,  
Of Viamala? There I seem to stand,  
As in life's morn; permitted to behold,  
From the dread chasm, woods climbing  
above woods, 10  
In pomp that fades not; everlasting snows;  
And skies that ne'er relinquish their  
repose;  
Such power possess the family of floods  
Over the minds of Poets, young or old!

## XI.

IN THE WOODS OF RYDAL.

[Composed ?.—Published 1827.]

WILD Redbreast! hadst thou at Je-  
mima's lip  
Pecked, as at mine, thus boldly, Love  
might say,

A half-blown rose had tempted thee  
to sip  
Its glistening dew; but hallowed is  
the clay  
Which the Muse warms; and I, whose  
head is grey, 5  
Am not unworthy of thy fellowship;  
Nor could I let one thought—one mo-  
tion—slip  
That might thy sylvan confidence betray.  
For are we not all His without whose  
care  
Vouchsafed no sparrow falleth to the  
ground? 10  
Who gives his Angels wings to speed  
through air,  
And rolls the planets through the blue  
profound;  
Then peck or perch, fond Flutterer! nor  
forbear  
To trust a Poet in still musings bound.

XII.

[Composed ?.—Published 1827.]

WHEN Philoctetes in the Lemnian isle  
Like a Form sculptured on a monument  
Lay couched; on him or his dread bow  
unbent  
Some wild Bird oft might settle and  
beguile  
The rigid features of a transient smile, 5  
Disperse the tear, or to the sigh give  
vent,  
Slackening the pains of ruthless banish-  
ment  
From his loved home, and from heroic  
toil.  
And trust that spiritual Creatures round  
us move,  
Griefs to allay which Reason cannot  
heal; 10  
Yea, veriest reptiles have sufficed to  
prove  
To fettered wretchedness that no Bas-  
tille  
Is deep enough to exclude the light of  
love,  
Though man for brother man has ceased  
to feel.

XIII.

[Composed ?.—Published 1827.]

WHILE Anna's peers and early play-  
mates tread,  
In freedom, mountain-turf and river's  
marge;  
Or float with music in the festal barge;  
Rein the proud steed, or through the  
dance are led;  
Her doom it is to press a weary bed— 5  
Till oft her guardian Angel, to some  
charge  
More urgent called, will stretch his wings  
at large,  
And friends too rarely prop the languid  
head.  
Yet, helped by Genius—untired com-  
forter,  
The presence even of a stuffed Owl for  
her 10  
Can cheat the time; sending her fancy out  
To ivied castles and to moonlight skies,  
Though he can neither stir a plume, nor  
shout;  
Nor veil, with restless film, his staring  
eyes.

XIV.

TO THE CUCKOO.

[Composed ?.—Published 1827.]

Nor the whole warbling grove in concert  
heard  
When sunshine follows shower, the breast  
can thrill  
Like the first summons, Cuckoo! of thy  
bill,  
With its twin notes inseparably paired.  
The captive 'mid damp vaults unsunned,  
unaired, 5  
Measuring the periods of his lonely doom,  
That cry can reach; and to the sick  
man's room  
Sends gladness, by no languid smile  
declared.  
The lordly eagle-race through hostile  
search  
May perish; time may come when never  
more 10  
The wilderness shall hear the lion roar;

But, long as cock shall crow from house-  
hold perch  
To rouse the dawn, soft gales shall speed  
thy wing,  
And thy erratic voice be faithful to the  
Spring!

## XV.

TO —

[Composed ?.—Published 1835.]

"Miss not the occasion: by the forelock take  
That subtle Power, the never-halting Time,  
Lest a mere moment's putting-off should make  
Mischance almost as heavy as a crime."

"WAIT, prithee, wait!" this answer Les-  
bia threw

Forth to her Dove, and took no further  
heed.

Her eye was busy, while her fingers flew  
Across the harp, with soul-engrossing  
speed;

But from that bondage when her thoughts  
were freed 5

She rose, and toward the close-shut case-  
ment drew,

Whence the poor unregarded Favourite,  
true

To old affections, had been heard to plead  
With flapping wing for entrance. What  
a shriek

Forced from that voice so lately tuned  
to a strain 10

Of harmony!—a shriek of terror, pain,  
And self-reproach! for, from aloft, a Kite  
Pounced,—and the Dove, which from its  
ruthless beak

She could not rescue, perished in her  
sight!

## XVI.

THE INFANT M—— M——.

[Composed ?.—Published 1827.]

UNQUIET Childhood here by special grace  
Forgets her nature, opening like a flower  
That neither feeds nor wastes its vital  
power

In painful struggles. Months each other  
chase,

And nought untunes that Infant's voice;  
no trace 5

Of fretful temper sullies her pure cheek;  
Prompt, lively, self-sufficing, yet so meek  
That one enrapt with gazing on her face  
(Which even the placid innocence of death  
Could scarcely make more placid, heaven  
more bright) 10

Might learn to picture, for the eye of  
faith,

The Virgin, as she shone with kindred  
light;

A nursing couched upon her mother's  
knee,

Beneath some shady palm of Galilee.

## XVII.

TO —, IN HER SEVENTIETH YEAR.

[Composed 1824.—Published 1827.]

SUCH age how beautiful! O Lady bright,  
Whose mortal lineaments seem all refined  
By favouring Nature and a saintly Mind  
To something purer and more exquisite  
Than flesh and blood; whene'er thou  
meet'st my sight, 5

When I behold thy blanched unwithered  
cheek,

Thy temples fringed with locks of gleam-  
ing white,

And head that droops because the soul  
is meek,

Thee with the welcome Snowdrop I com-  
pare;

That child of winter, prompting thoughts  
that climb 10

From desolation toward the genial prime;  
Or with the Moon conquering earth's  
misty air,

And filling more and more with crystal  
light

As pensive Evening deepens into night.

## XVIII.

TO ROTH A Q——.

[Composed some years after 1822.—Published 1827.]

ROTH A, my Spiritual Child! this head  
was grey

When at the sacred font for thee I stood;  
Pledged till thou reach the verge of

womanhood,

And shalt become thy own sufficient stay:  
Too late, I feel, sweet Orphan! was the  
day 5

For steadfast hope the contract to fulfil;  
Yet shall my blessing hover o'er thee still,  
Embodied in the music of this Lay,  
Breathed forth beside the peaceful moun-  
tain Stream<sup>1</sup>

Whose murmur soothed thy languid Mo-  
ther's ear 10

After her throes, this Stream of name  
more dear

Since thou dost bear it,—a memorial  
theme

For others; for thy future self, a spell  
To summon fancies out of Time's dark  
cell.

## XIX.

A GRAVESTONE UPON THE FLOOR IN THE  
CLOISTERS OF WORCESTER CATHEDRAL.

[Composed probably 1828.—Published 1829 (*The  
Keepsake*); ed. 1832.]

"*MISERRIMUS!*" and neither name nor  
date,

Prayer, text, or symbol, graven upon  
the stone;

Nought but that word assigned to the  
unknown,

That solitary word—to separate  
From all, and cast a cloud around the fate

Of him who lies beneath. Most wretched  
one, 6

Who chose his epitaph?—Himself alone  
Could thus have dared the grave to

agitate,  
And claim, among the dead, this awful

crown;  
Nor doubt that He marked also for his

own 10  
Close to these cloistral steps a burial-

place,  
That every foot might fall with heavier

tread,  
Trampling upon his vileness. Stranger,

pass  
Softly!—To save the contrite, Jesus bled.

<sup>1</sup> The river Rotha, that flows into Windermere  
from the Lakes of Grasmere and Rydal.

## XX.

ROMAN ANTIQUITIES DISCOVERED AT  
BISHOPSTONE, HEREFORDSHIRE.

[Composed?—Published 1835.]

WHILE poring Antiquarians search the  
ground

Upturned with curious pains, the Bard,  
a Seer,

Takes fire:—The men that have been  
reappear;

Romans for travel girt, for business  
gowned;

And some recline on couches, myrtle-  
crowned, 5

In festal glee: why not? For fresh and  
clear,

As if its hues were of the passing year,  
Dawns this time-buried pavement. From  
that mound

Hoards may come forth of Trajans, Maxi-  
mins,

Shrunk into coins with all their warlike  
toil; 10

Or a fierce impress issues with its foil  
Of tenderness—the Wolf, whose suckling

Twins  
The unlettered ploughboy pities when

he wins  
The casual treasure from the furrowed soil.

## XXI.

1830.

[Composed November, 1830.—Published 1835.]

CHATSWORTH! thy stately mansion, and  
the pride

Of thy domain, strange contrast do present  
To house and home in many a craggy rent

Of the wild Peak; where new-born waters  
glide

Through fields whose thrifty occupants  
abide 5

As in a dear and chosen banishment,  
With every semblance of entire content;

So kind is simple Nature, fairly tried!  
Yet He whose heart in childhood gave

her troth  
To pastoral dales, thin-set with modest

farms, 10  
May learn, if judgment strengthen with  
his growth,

That, not for Fancy only, pomp hath charms;  
And, strenuous to protect from lawless harms  
The extremes of favoured life, may honour both.

## XXII.

A TRADITION OF OKER HILL IN DARLEY  
DALE, DERBYSHIRE.

[Composed probably 1828.—Published 1829 (*The Keepsake*); ed. 1832.]

'Tis said that to the brow of yon fair hill  
Two Brothers clomb, and, turning face from face,  
Nor one look more exchanging, grief to still  
Or feed, each planted on that lofty place  
A chosen Tree; then, eager to fulfil 5  
Their courses, like two new-born rivers, they  
In opposite directions urged their way  
Down from the far-seen mount. No blast might kill  
Or blight that fond memorial;—the trees grew,  
And now entwine their arms; but ne'er again 10  
Embraced those Brothers upon earth's wide plain;  
Nor aught of mutual joy or sorrow knew  
Until their spirits mingled in the sea  
That to itself takes all, Eternity.

## XXIII.

FILIAL PIETY<sup>1</sup>.

[Composed probably 1828.—Published 1829 (*The Casket*); ed. 1832.]

On the Wayside between Preston and Liverpool.  
UNTOUCHED through all severity of cold;  
Inviolatè, whate'er the cottage hearth

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Scarisbrick was killed by a stroke of lightning while building a turf-stack between Ormskirk and Preston in 1772. His son James finished the stack, and while he lived kept it in constant repair in memory of the father. James died in 1824, leaving to his grandchildren goblets and decanters cut with a turf-stack between two trees. (See Mr. J. Bromley's letter to the *Athenæum*, May 17, 1890).—Ed.

Might need for comfort, or for festal mirth;  
That Pile of Turf is half a century old:  
Yes, Traveller! fifty winters have been told  
Since suddenly the dart of death went forth 5  
'Gainst him who raised it,—his last work on earth:  
Thence has it, with the Son, so strong a hold  
Upon his Father's memory, that his hands,  
Through reverence, touch it only to repair 10  
Its waste.—Though crumbling with each breath of air,  
In annual renovation thus it stands—  
Rude Mausoleum! but wrens nestle there,  
And red-breasts warble when sweet sounds are rare.

## XXIV.

TO THE AUTHOR'S PORTRAIT.

Painted at Rydal Mount, by W. Pickersgill, Esq.,  
for St. John's College, Cambridge.]

[Composed probably 1832.—Published 1835.]

Go, faithful Portrait! and where long hath knelt  
Margaret, the saintly Foundress, take thy place;  
And, if Time spare the colours for the grace  
Which to the work surpassing skill hath dealt,  
Thou, on thy rock reclined, though kingdoms melt 5  
And states be torn up by the roots, wilt seem  
To breathe in rural peace, to hear the stream,  
And think and feel as once the Poet felt.  
Whate'er thy fate, those features have not grown  
Unrecognised through many a household tear 10  
More prompt, more glad, to fall than drops of dew

By morning shed around a flower half-blown;  
Tears of delight, that testified how true  
To life thou art, and, in thy truth, how dear!

## XXV.

[Composed 1832 or 1833.—Published 1835.]

WHY art thou silent! Is thy love a plant  
Of such weak fibre that the treacherous air

Of absence withers what was once so fair?  
Is there no debt to pay, no boon to grant?  
Yet have my thoughts for thee been vigilant— 5

Bound to thy service with unceasing care,  
The mind's least generous wish a mendicant

For nought but what thy happiness could spare.

Speak—though this soft warm heart, once free to hold

A thousand tender pleasures, thine and mine, 10

Be left more desolate, more dreary cold  
Than a forsaken bird's-nest filled with snow

'Mid its own bush of leafless eglantine—  
Speak, that my torturing doubts their end may know!

## XXVI.

TO B. R. HAYDON, ON SEEING HIS PICTURE  
OF NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE ON THE  
ISLAND OF ST. HELENA.

[Composed June 11, 1831.—Published 1832.]

HAYDON! let worthier judges praise the skill

Here by thy pencil shown in truth of lines

And charm of colours; I applaud those signs

Of thought, that give the true poetic thrill;

That unencumbered whole of blank and still, 5

Sky without cloud—ocean without a wave;

And the one Man that laboured to enslave

The World, sole-standing high on the bare hill—

Back turned, arms folded, the unapparent face

Tinged, we may fancy, in this dreary place 10

With light reflected from the invisible sun

Set, like his fortunes; but not set for aye

Like them. The unguilty Power pursues his way,

And before *him* doth dawn perpetual run.

## XXVII.

[Composed ?.—Published: vol. of 1842.]

A POET!—He hath put his heart to school,

Nor dares to move unpropped upon the staff

Which Art hath lodged within his hand—must laugh

By precept only, and shed tears by rule.

Thy Art be Nature; the live current quaff, 5

And let the groveller sip his stagnant pool,

In fear that else, when Critics grave and cool

Have killed him, Scorn should write his epitaph.

How does the Meadow-flower its bloom unfold?

Because the lovely little flower is free 10

Down to its root, and, in that freedom, bold;

And so the grandeur of the Forest-tree

Comes not by casting in a formal mould,  
But from its *own* divine vitality.

## XXVIII.

[Composed ?.—Published: vol. of 1842.]

THE most alluring clouds that mount the sky

Owe to a troubled element their forms,  
Their hues to sunset. If with raptured eye

We watch their splendour, shall we covet storms,

And wish the Lord of day his slow decline 5

Would hasten, that such pomp may float  
 on high?  
 Behold, already they forget to shine,  
 Dissolve—and leave to him who gazed a  
 sigh.  
 Not loth to thank each moment for its boon  
 Of pure delight, come whensoe'er it may,  
 Peace let us seek,—to steadfast things  
 attune 11  
 Calm expectations, leaving to the gay  
 And volatile their love of transient  
 bowers,  
 The house that cannot pass away be ours.

## XXIX.

ON A PORTRAIT OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON  
 UPON THE FIELD OF WATERLOO, BY  
 HAYDON.

[Composed August 31, 1840.—Published: vol. of  
 1842.]

By Art's bold privilege Warrior and War-  
 horse stand  
 On ground yet strewn with their last  
 battle's wreck;  
 Let the Steed glory while his Master's hand  
 Lies fixed for ages on his conscious neck;  
 But by the Chieftain's look, though at his  
 side 5  
 Hangs that day's treasured sword, how  
 firm a check  
 Is given to triumph and all human pride!  
 Yon trophied Mound shrinks to a sha-  
 dowy speck  
 In his calm presence! Him the mighty deed  
 Elates not, brought far nearer the grave's  
 rest, 10  
 As shows that time-worn face, for he such  
 seed  
 Has sown as yields, we trust, the fruit of  
 fame  
 In Heaven; hence no one blushes for thy  
 name,  
 Conqueror, 'mid some sad thoughts, di-  
 vinely blest!

## XXX.

COMPOSED ON A MAY MORNING, 1838.

[Composed May, 1838.—Published: Sonnet-vol.  
 of 1838.]

LIFE with yon Lambs, like day, is just  
 begun,  
 Yet Nature seems to them a heavenly guide.

Does joy approach? they meet the coming  
 tide;  
 And sullenness avoid, as now they  
 shun  
 Pale twilight's lingering glooms,—and in  
 the sun 5  
 Couch near their dams, with quiet satis-  
 fied;  
 Or gambol—each with his shadow at his  
 side,  
 Varying its shape wherever he may  
 run.  
 As they from turf yet hoar with sleepy  
 dew  
 All turn, and court the shining and the  
 green, 10  
 Where herbs look up, and opening flowers  
 are seen;  
 Why to God's goodness cannot We be  
 true,  
 And so, His gifts and promises between,  
 Feed to the last on pleasures ever new?

## XXXI.

[Composed ?.—Published: vol. of 1842.]

Lo! where she stands fixed in a saint-like  
 trance,  
 One upward hand, as if she needed rest  
 From rapture, lying softly on her breast!  
 Nor wants her eyeball an ethereal glance;  
 But not the less—nay more—that counte-  
 nance, 5  
 While thus illumined, tells of painful  
 strife  
 For a sick heart made weary of this life  
 By love, long crossed with adverse circum-  
 stance.  
 —Would She were now as when she hoped  
 to pass  
 At God's appointed hour to them who  
 tread 10  
 Heaven's sapphire pavement, yet breathed  
 well content,  
 Well pleased, her foot should print earth's  
 common grass,  
 Lived thankful for day's light, for daily  
 bread,  
 For health, and time in obvious duty  
 spent.

## XXXII.

TO A PAINTER.

[Composed 1840.—Published: vol. of 1842.]

ALL praise the Likeness by thy skill  
 portrayed;  
 But 'tis a fruitless task to paint for me,  
 Who, yielding not to changes Time has  
 made,  
 By the habitual light of memory see  
 Eyes unbedimmed, see bloom that cannot  
 fade, 5  
 And smiles that from their birthplace  
 ne'er shall flee  
 Into the land where ghosts and phantoms  
 be;  
 And, seeing this, own nothing in its stead.  
 Couldst thou go back into far-distant  
 years,  
 Or share with me, fond thought! that  
 inward eye, 10  
 Then, and then only, Painter! could thy  
 Art  
 The visual powers of Nature satisfy,  
 Which hold, whate'er to common sight  
 appears,  
 Their sovereign empire in a faithful  
 heart.

## XXXIII.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

[Composed 1840.—Published: vol. of 1842.]

THOUGH I beheld at first with blank sur-  
 prise  
 This Work, I now have gazed on it so  
 long  
 I see its truth with reluctant eyes;  
 O, my Belovèd! I have done thee wrong,  
 Conscious of blessedness, but, whence it  
 sprung, 5  
 Ever too heedless, as I now perceive:  
 Morn into noon did pass, noon into eve,  
 And the old day was welcome as the  
 young,  
 As welcome, and as beautiful—in sooth  
 More beautiful, as being a thing more  
 holy: 10  
 Thanks to thy virtues, to the eternal  
 youth

Of all thy goodness, never melancholy;  
 To thy large heart and humble mind, that  
 cast  
 Into one vision, future, present, past.

## XXXIV.

[Composed 1838.—Published: Sonnet-vol. of 1838.]

HARK! 'tis the Thrush, undaunted, unde-  
 prest,  
 By twilight premature of cloud and rain;  
 Nor does that roaring wind deaden his  
 strain  
 Who carols thinking of his Love and nest,  
 And seems, as more incited, still more  
 blest. 5  
 Thanks; thou hast snapped a fireside  
 Prisoner's chain,  
 Exulting Warbler! eased a fretted brain,  
 And in a moment charmed my cares to rest.  
 Yes, I will forth, bold Bird! and front  
 the blast,  
 That we may sing together, if thou wilt,  
 So loud, so clear, my Partner through  
 life's day, 11  
 Mute in her nest love-chosen, if not love-  
 built  
 Like thine, shall gladden, as in seasons  
 past,  
 Thrilled by loose snatches of the social  
 Lay.

## XXXV.

[Composed 1838.—Published: Sonnet-vol. of 1838.]

'Tis He whose yester-evening's high dis-  
 dain  
 Beat back the roaring storm—but how  
 subdued  
 His day-break note, a sad vicissitude!  
 Does the hour's drowsy weight his glee  
 restrain?  
 Or, like the nightingale, her joyous vein 5  
 Pleased to renounce, does this dear Thrush  
 attune  
 His voice to suit the temper of yon Moon  
 Doubly depressed, setting, and in her  
 wane?  
 Rise, tardy Sun! and let the Songster  
 prove  
 (The balance trembling between night  
 and morn 10

No longer) with what ecstasy upborne  
 He can pour forth his spirit. In heaven  
     above,  
 And earth below, they best can serve true  
     gladness  
 Who meet most feelingly the calls of  
     sadness.

## XXXVI.

[Composed 1837.—Published: Sonnet-vol. of 1833.]

OH what a Wreck! how changed in mien  
     and speech!  
 Yet—though dread Powers, that work in  
     mystery, spin  
 Entanglings of the brain; though shadows  
     stretch  
 O'er the chilled heart—reflect; far, far  
     within  
 Hers is a holy Being, freed from Sin. 5  
 She is not what she seems, a forlorn  
     wretch,  
 But delegated Spirits comforts fetch  
 To Her from heights that Reason may  
     not win.  
 Like Children, She is privileged to hold  
 Divine communion; both do live and  
     move, 10  
 What'e'er to shallow Faith their ways  
     unfold,  
 Inly illumined by Heaven's pitying love;  
 Love pitying innocence, not long to last,  
 In them—in Her our sins and sorrows  
     past.

## XXXVII.

[Composed March 8, 1842.—Published: vol. of 1842.]

INTENT on gathering wool from hedge  
     and brake  
 Yon busy Little-ones rejoice that soon  
 A poor old Dame will bless them for the  
     boon:  
 Great is their glee while flake they add to  
     flake  
 With rival earnestness; far other strife 5  
 Than will hereafter move them, if they  
     make  
 Pastime their idol, give their day of life  
 To pleasure snatched for reckless plea-  
     sure's sake.

Can pomp and show allay one heart-born  
     grief?  
 Pains which the World inflicts can she  
     requite? 10  
 Not for an interval however brief;  
 The silent thoughts that search for stead-  
     fast light,  
 Love from her depths, and Duty in her  
     might,  
 And Faith—these only yield secure relief.

## XXXVIII.

A PLEA FOR AUTHORS.

[Composed May, 1838.—Published: Sonnet-vol. of 1838.]

FAILING impartial measure to dispense  
 To every suitor, Equity is lame;  
 And social Justice, stript of reverence  
 For natural rights, a mockery and a  
     shame;  
 Law but a servile dupe of false pretence,  
 If, guarding grossest things from common  
     claim 6  
 Now and for ever, She, to works that  
     came  
 From mind and spirit, grudge a short-  
     lived fence.  
 "What! lengthened privilege, a lineal tie,  
 For *Books!*" Yes, heartless Ones, or be it  
     proved 10  
 That 'tis a fault in Us to have lived and  
     loved  
 Like others, with like temporal hopes to die;  
 No public harm that Genius from her  
     course  
 Be turned; and streams of truth dried  
     up, even at their source!

## XXXIX.

VALEDICTORY SONNET.

Closing the Volume of Sonnets published in 1838.

[Composed 1838.—Published: Sonnet-vol. of 1838.]

SERVING no haughty Muse, my hands  
     have here  
 Disposed some cultured Flowerets (drawn  
     from spots  
 Where they bloomed singly, or in scat-  
     tered knots,)

Each kind in several beds of one par-  
terre;  
Both to allure the casual Loiterer, 5  
And that, so placed, my Nursling may  
requite  
Studious regard with opportune delight,  
Nor be unthanked, unless I fondly err.  
But metaphor dismissed, and thanks  
apart,  
Reader, farewell! My last words let them  
be— 10  
If in this book Fancy and Truth agree;  
If simple Nature trained by careful Art  
Through It have won a passage to thy  
heart;  
Grant me thy love, I crave no other fee!

XL.

TO THE REV. CHRISTOPHER WORDSWORTH,  
D.D., MASTER OF HARROW SCHOOL,  
After the perusal of his "Theophilus Anglicanus,"  
recently published.  
[Composed December 11, 1843.—Published 1845.]  
ENLIGHTENED Teacher, gladly from thy  
hand  
Have I received this proof of pains be-  
stowed  
By Thee to guide thy Pupils on the  
road  
That, in our native isle, and every land,  
The Church, when trusting in divine  
command 5  
And in her Catholic attributes, hath trod:  
O may these lessons be with profit scanned  
To thy heart's wish, thy labour blest by  
God!  
So the bright faces of the young and  
gay  
Shall look more bright—the happy,  
happier still; 10  
Catch, in the pauses of their keenest  
play,  
Motions of thought which elevate the  
will  
And, like the Spire that from your classic  
Hill  
Points heavenward, indicate the end and  
way.

XLI.

TO THE PLANET VENUS,

Upon its approximation (as an Evening Star) to  
the Earth, January, 1838.

[Composed January, 1838.—Published: Sonnet-  
vol. of 1838.]

WHAT strong allurements draws, what  
spirit guides,  
Thee, Vesper! brightening still, as if the  
nearer  
Thou com'st to man's abode the spot grew  
dearer  
Night after night? True is it Nature  
hides  
Her treasures less and less.—Man now  
presides 5  
In power, where once he trembled in his  
weakness;  
Science advances with gigantic strides;  
But are we aught enriched in love and  
meekness?  
Aught dost thou see, bright Star! of pure  
and wise  
More than in humbler times graced human  
story; 10  
That makes our hearts more apt to sym-  
pathize  
With heaven, our souls more fit for future  
glory,  
When earth shall vanish from our closing  
eyes,  
Ere we lie down in our last dormitory?

XLII.

[Composed December 24, 1842.—Published 1845.]

WANSFELL!<sup>1</sup> this Household has a fa-  
voured lot,  
Living with liberty on thee to gaze,  
To watch while Morn first crowns thee  
with her rays,  
Or when along thy breast serenely float  
Evening's angelic clouds. Yet ne'er a  
note 5  
Hath sounded (shame upon the Bard!)  
thy praise  
For all that thou, as if from heaven, hast  
brought

<sup>1</sup> The Hill that rises to the south-east, above  
Ambleside.

Of glory lavished on our quiet days.  
 Bountiful Son of Earth! when we are  
     gone  
 From every object dear to mortal sight, 10  
 As soon we shall be, may these words  
     attest  
 How oft, to elevate our spirits, shone  
 Thy visionary majesties of light,  
 How in thy pensive glooms our hearts  
     found rest.

## XLIII.

[Composed January 1, 1843.—Published 1845.]

WHILE beams of orient light shoot wide  
     and high,  
 Deep in the vale a little rural Town <sup>1</sup>  
 Breathes forth a cloud-like creature of its  
     own,  
 That mounts not toward the radiant  
     morning sky,  
 But, with a less ambitious sympathy, 5  
 Hangs o'er its Parent waking to the cares  
 Troubles and toils that every day pre-  
     pares.  
 So Fancy, to the musing Poet's eye,  
 Endears that Lingerer. And how blest  
     her sway,  
 (Like influence never may my soul reject),  
 If the calm Heaven, now to its zenith  
     decked 11  
 With glorious forms in numberless array,  
 To the lone shepherd on the hills disclose  
 Gleams from a world in which the saints  
     repose.

## XLIV.

[Composed ?.—Published 1827.]

IN my mind's eye a Temple, like a cloud  
 Slowly surmounting some invidious hill,  
 Rose out of darkness: the bright Work  
     stood still;  
 And might of its own beauty have been  
     proud,  
 But it was fashioned and to God was  
     vowed 5  
 By Virtues that diffused, in every part,  
 Spirit divine through forms of human art:

<sup>1</sup> Ambleside.

Faith had her arch—her arch, when winds  
     blow loud,  
 Into the consciousness of safety thrilled;  
 And Love her towers of dread foundation  
     laid 10  
 Under the grave of things; Hope had her  
     spire  
 Star-high, and pointing still to some-  
     thing higher;  
 Trembling I gazed, but heard a voice—it  
     said,  
 "Hell-gates are powerless Phantoms  
     when *we* build."

## XLV.

ON THE PROJECTED KENDAL AND  
 WINDERMERE RAILWAY.

[Composed October 12, 1844.—Published in pam-  
 phlet *Kendal and Windermere Railway*, 1844;  
 ed. 1845.]

Is then no nook of English ground secure  
 From rash assault? <sup>2</sup> Schemes of retire-  
     ment sown  
 In youth, and 'mid the busy world kept  
     pure  
 As when their earliest flowers of hope  
     were blown,  
 Must perish;—how can they this blight  
     endure? 5  
 And must he too the ruthless change be-  
     moan  
 Who scorns a false utilitarian lure  
 'Mid his paternal fields at random thrown?  
 Baffle the threat, bright Scene, from Or-  
     rest-head  
 Given to the pausing traveller's rapturous  
     glance: 10  
 Plead for thy peace, thou beautiful ro-  
     mance

<sup>2</sup> The degree and kind of attachment which many of the yeomanry feel to their small inheritances can scarcely be over-rated. Near the house of one of them stands a magnificent tree, which a neighbour of the owner advised him to fell for profit's sake. "Fell it!" exclaimed the yeoman, "I had rather fall on my knees and worship it." It happens, I believe, that the intended railway would pass through this little property, and I hope that an apology for the answer will not be thought necessary by one who enters into the strength of the feeling.

Of nature; and, if human hearts be dead,  
 Speak, passing winds; ye torrents, with  
     your strong  
 And constant voice, protest against the  
     wrong.

## XLVI.

[Composed 1844.—Published along with XLV.]

PROUD were ye, Mountains, when, in times  
     of old,  
 Your patriot sons, to stem invasive war,  
 Intrenched your brows; ye gloried in each  
     scar:  
 Now, for your shame, a Power, the Thirst  
     of Gold,  
 That rules o'er Britain like a baneful star,  
 Wills that your peace, your beauty, shall  
     be sold, 6  
 And clear way made for her triumphal car  
 Through the beloved retreats your arms  
     enfold!  
 Hear ye that Whistle? As her long-linked  
     Train  
 Swept onwards, did the vision cross your  
     view? 10  
 Yes, ye were startled;—and, in balance  
     true,  
 Weighing the mischief with the promised  
     gain,  
 Mountains, and Vales, and Floods, I call  
     on you  
 To share the passion of a just disdain.

## XLVII.

AT FURNESS ABBEY.

[Composed probably 1845.—Published 1845.]

HERE, where, of havoc tired and rash  
     undoing,  
 Man left this Structure to become Time's  
     prey,  
 A soothing spirit follows in the way  
 That Nature takes, her counter-work pur-  
     suing.  
 See how her ivy clasps the sacred Ruin, 5

Fall to prevent or beautify decay;  
 And, on the mouldered walls, how bright  
     how gay,  
 The flowers in pearly dew their bloom  
     renewing!  
 Thanks to the place, blessings upon the  
     hour;  
 Even as I speak the rising Sun's first  
     smile 10  
 Gleams on the grass-crowned top of yon  
     tall Tower,  
 Whose cawing occupants with joy pro-  
     claim  
 Prescriptive title to the shattered pile,  
 Where, Cavendish, *thine* seems nothing  
     but a name!

## XLVIII.

AT FURNESS ABBEY.

[Composed June 21, 1845.—Published 1845.]

WELL have yon Railway Labourers to  
     THIS ground  
 Withdrawn for noontide rest. They sit,  
     they walk  
 Among the Ruins, but no idle talk  
 Is heard; to grave demeanour all are  
     bound;  
 And from one voice a Hymn with tuneful  
     sound 5  
 Hallows once more the long-deserted  
     Quire  
 And thrills the old sepulchral earth, a-  
     round.  
 Others look up, and with fixed eyes ad-  
     mire  
 That wide-spanned arch, wondering how  
     it was raised,  
 To keep, so high in air, its strength and  
     grace: 10  
 All seem to feel the spirit of the place,  
 And by the general reverence God is  
     praised:  
 Profane Despoilers, stand ye not reproved,  
 While thus these simple-hearted men are  
     moved?

# MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN SCOTLAND, 1803.

## I.

### DEPARTURE

FROM THE VALE OF GRASMERE. AUGUST,  
1803.

[Composed 1811<sup>1</sup>.—Published 1827.]

THE gentlest Shade that walked Elysian  
plains

Might sometimes covet dissoluble chains;  
Even for the tenants of the zone that lies  
Beyond the stars, celestial Paradise,  
Methinks 'twould heighten joy, to over-  
leap

At will the crystal battlements, and peep  
Into some other region, though less fair,  
To see how things are made and managed  
there.

Change for the worse might please, in-  
cursion bold

Into the tracts of darkness and of cold: so  
O'er Limbo lake with aery flight to steer,  
And on the verge of Chaos hang in fear.  
Such animation often do I find,  
Power in my breast, wings growing in my  
mind,

Then, when some rock or hill is overpast,  
Perchance without one look behind me  
cast,

Some barrier with which Nature, from  
the birth

Of things, has fenced this fairest spot on  
earth.

O pleasant transit, Grasmere! to resign  
Such happy fields, abodes so calm as thine;  
Not like an outcast with himself at strife;  
The slave of business, time, or care for life,

<sup>1</sup> Originally the opening lines of the *Epistle*  
to *Sir George Beaumont*. See p. 521.—Ed.

But moved by choice; or, if constrained  
in part,

Yet still with Nature's freedom at the  
heart;—

To cull contentment upon wildest shores,  
And luxuries extract from bleakest moors;  
With prompt embrace all beauty to enfold,  
And having rights in all that we behold.

—Then why these lingering steps?—A  
bright adieu,

For a brief absence, prove that love is true;  
Ne'er can the way be irksome or forlorn  
That winds into itself for sweet return.

## II.

### AT THE GRAVE OF BURNS.

1803.

SEVEN YEARS AFTER HIS DEATH.

[Composed partly before 1807.—Published: vol.  
of 1842.]

I SHIVER, Spirit fierce and bold,  
At thought of what I now behold:  
As vapours breathed from dungeons cold  
Strike pleasure dead,  
So sadness comes from out the mould  
Where Burns is laid.

And have I then thy bones so near,  
And thou forbidden to appear?  
As if it were thyself that's here  
I shrink with pain;  
And both my wishes and my fear  
Alike are vain.

Off weight—nor press on weight!—away  
Dark thoughts!—they came, but not to  
stay;

With chastened feelings would I pay  
The tribute due

To him, and aught that hides his clay  
From mortal view.

Fresh as the flower, whose modest worth  
He sang, his genius "glinted" forth, 20  
Rose like a star that touching earth,  
For so it seems,  
Doth glorify its humble birth  
With matchless beams.

The piercing eye, the thoughtful brow, 25  
The struggling heart, where be they now?—  
Full soon the Aspirant of the plough,  
The prompt, the brave,  
Slept, with the obscurest, in the low  
And silent grave. 30

I mourned with thousands, but as one  
More deeply grieved, for He was gone  
Whose light I hailed when first it shone,  
And showed my youth 34  
How Verse may build a princely throne  
On humble truth.

Alas! where'er the current tends,  
Regret pursues and with it blends,—  
Huge Criffel's hoary top ascends  
By Skiddaw seen,— 40  
Neighbours we were, and loving friends  
We might have been;

True friends though diversely inclined;  
But heart with heart and mind with mind,  
Where the main fibres are entwined, 45  
Through Nature's skill,  
May even by contraries be joined  
More closely still.

The tear will start, and let it flow;  
Thou "poor Inhabitant below," 50  
At this dread moment—even so—  
Might we together  
Have sate and talked where gowans blow,  
Or on wild heather.

What treasures would have then been  
placed 55  
Within my reach; of knowledge graced  
By fancy what a rich repast!  
But why go on?—

Oh! spare to sweep, thou mournful blast,  
His grave grass-grown. 60

There, too, a Son, his joy and pride,  
(Not three weeks past the Stripling died,)  
Lies gathered to his Father's side,

Soul-moving sight!  
Yet one to which is not denied 65  
Some sad delight.

For he is safe, a quiet bed  
Hath early found among the dead,  
Harboured where none can be misled,  
Wronged, or distressed; 70  
And surely here it may be said  
That such are blest.

And oh for Thee, by pitying grace  
Checked oft-times in a devious race,  
May He, who halloweth the place 75  
Where Man is laid,  
Receive thy Spirit in the embrace  
For which it prayed!

Sighing I turned away; but ere  
Night fell I heard, or seemed to hear, 80  
Music that sorrow comes not near,  
A ritual hymn,  
Chanted in love that casts out fear  
By Seraphim.

### III.

#### THOUGHTS

SUGGESTED THE DAY FOLLOWING, ON THE  
BANKS OF NITH, NEAR THE POET'S  
RESIDENCE.

[Finished 1839.—Published: vol. of 1842.]

Too frail to keep the lofty vow  
That must have followed when his brow  
Was wreathed—"The Vision" tells us  
how—

With holly spray,  
He faltered, drifted to and fro, 5  
And passed away.

Well might such thoughts, dear Sister,  
throng

Our minds when, lingering all too long,  
Over the grave of Burns we hung

In social grief— 10  
Indulged as if it were a wrong  
To seek relief.

But, leaving each unquiet theme  
Where gentlest judgments may misdeem,  
And prompt to welcome every gleam 15

Of good and fair,  
Let us beside the limpid Stream  
Breathe hopeful air.

Enough of sorrow, wreck, and blight ;  
 Think rather of those moments bright 20  
 When to the consciousness of right  
     His course was true,  
 When Wisdom prospered in his sight  
     And virtue grew.

Yes, freely let our hearts expand, 25  
 Freely as in youth's season bland,  
 When side by side, his Book in hand,  
     We wont to stray,  
 Our pleasure varying at command-  
     Of each sweet Lay. 30

How oft inspired must he have trod  
 These pathways, yon far-stretching road !  
 There lurks his home ; in that Abode,  
     With mirth elate,  
 Or in his nobly-pensive mood, 35  
     The Rustic sate.

Proud thoughts that Image overawes,  
 Before it humbly let us pause,  
 And ask of Nature from what cause  
     And by what rules 40  
 She trained her Burns to win applause  
     That shames the Schools.

Through busiest street and loneliest glen  
 Are felt the flashes of his pen ;  
 He rules 'mid winter snows, and when 45  
     Bees fill their hives ;  
 Deep in the general heart of men  
     His power survives.

What need of fields in some far clime  
 Where Heroes, Sages, Bards sublime, 50  
 And all that fetched the flowing rhyme  
     From genuine springs,  
 Shall dwell together till old Time  
     Folds up his wings ?

Sweet Mercy ! to the gates of Heaven 55  
 This Minstrel lead, his sins forgiven ;  
 The rueful conflict, the heart riven  
     With vain endeavour,  
 And memory of Earth's bitter leaven,  
     Effaced for ever. 60

But why to Him confine the prayer,  
 When kindred thoughts and yearnings  
     bear  
 On the frail heart the purest share

With all that live ?—  
 The best of what we do and are, 65  
     Just God, forgive !<sup>1</sup>

## IV.

## TO THE SONS OF BURNS,

## AFTER VISITING THE GRAVE OF THEIR FATHER.

[Composed partly 1803.—Published 1807<sup>2</sup>.

"The Poet's grave is in a corner of the churchyard.  
 We looked at it with melancholy and painful re-  
 flections, repeating to each other his own verses—  
 "Is there a man whose judgment clear,' etc."

—*Extract from the Journal of  
 my Fellow-traveller.*

'MID crowded obelisks and urns  
 I sought the untimely grave of Burns ;  
 Sons of the Bard, my heart still mourns  
     With sorrow true ;  
 And more would grieve, but that it turns 6  
     Trembling to you !

Through twilight shades of good and ill  
 Ye now are panting up life's hill,  
 And more than common strength and skill  
     Must ye display ; 10  
 If ye would give the better will  
     Its lawful sway.

Hath Nature strung your nerves to bear  
 Intemperance with less harm, beware !  
 But if the Poet's wit ye share, 15  
     Like him can speed  
 The social hour—of tenfold care  
     There will be need ;

For honest men delight will take  
 To spare your failings for his sake, 20  
 Will flatter you,—and fool and rake  
     Your steps pursue ;  
 And of your Father's name will make  
     A snare for you.

Far from their noisy haunts retire, 25  
 And add your voices to the quire  
 That sanctify the cottage fire  
     With service meet ;  
 There seek the genius of your Sire,  
     His spirit greet ; 30

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 902.

<sup>2</sup> Stanzas ii., iii., iv., viii., published in 1807 ;  
 stanzas i., v., vi., vii., published in 1827.—Ed.

Or where 'mid "lonely heights and hows,"  
He paid to Nature tuneful vows;  
Or wiped his honourable brows  
    Bedewed with toil,  
While reapers strove, or busy ploughs 35  
    Upturned the soil;

His judgment with benignant ray  
Shall guide, his fancy cheer, your way;  
But ne'er to a seductive lay  
    Let faith be given; 40  
Nor deem that "light which leads astray  
    Is light from Heaven."

Let no mean hope your souls enslave;  
Be independent, generous, brave;  
Your Father such example gave, 45  
    And such revere;  
But be admonished by his grave,  
    And think, and fear!

V.

ELLEN IRWIN:

OR,

THE BRAES OF KIRTLE<sup>1</sup>.

[Composed probably 1799 or 1800.—Published 1800.]

FAIR Ellen Irwin, when she sate  
Upon the braes of Kirtle,  
Was lovely as a Grecian maid  
Adorned with wreaths of myrtle;  
Young Adam Bruce beside her lay, 5  
And there did they beguile the day  
With love and gentle speeches,  
Beneath the budding beeches.

From many knights and many squires  
The Bruce had been selected;  
And Gordon, fairest of them all, 10  
By Ellen was rejected.  
Sad tidings to that noble Youth!  
For it may be proclaimed with truth,  
If Bruce hath loved sincerely, 15  
That Gordon loves as dearly.

But what are Gordon's form and face,  
His shattered hopes and crosses,

To them, 'mid Kirtle's pleasant braes,  
Reclined on flowers and mosses? 20  
Alas that ever he was born!  
The Gordon, couched behind a thorn,  
Sees them and their caressing;  
Beholds them blest and blessing.

Proud Gordon, maddened by the thoughts  
That through his brain are travelling, 25  
Rushed forth, and at the heart of Bruce  
He launched a deadly javelin!  
Fair Ellen saw it as it came,  
And, starting up to meet the same, 30  
Did with her body cover  
The Youth, her chosen lover.

And, falling into Bruce's arms,  
Thus died the beauteous Ellen,  
Thus, from the heart of her True-love, 35  
The mortal spear repelling.  
And Bruce, as soon as he had slain  
The Gordon, sailed away to Spain;  
And fought with rage incessant  
Against the Moorish crescent. 40

But many days, and many months,  
And many years ensuing,  
This wretched Knight did vainly seek  
The death that he was wooing.  
So, coming his last help to crave, 45  
Heart-broken, upon Ellen's grave  
His body he extended,  
And there his sorrow ended.

Now ye, who willingly have heard  
The tale I have been telling, 50  
May in Kirkconnell churchyard view  
The grave of lovely Ellen:  
By Ellen's side the Bruce is laid;  
And, for the stone upon his head,  
May no rude hand deface it, 55  
And its forlorn *Tit jact!*

VI.

TO A HIGHLAND GIRL,

AT INVERSNETHY, UPON LOCH LOMOND.

[Composed 1803.—Published 1807.]

SWEET Highland Girl, a very shower  
Of beauty is thy earthly dower!  
Twice seven consenting years have shed  
Their utmost bounty on thy head:

<sup>1</sup> The Kirtle is a river in the southern part of Scotland, on the banks of which the events here related took place.

And these grey rocks; that household  
lawn; 5  
Those trees, a veil just half withdrawn;  
This fall of water that doth make  
A murmur near the silent lake;  
This little bay; a quiet road  
That holds in shelter thy Abode— 10  
In truth together do ye seem  
Like something fashioned in a dream;  
Such Forms as from their covert peep  
When earthly cares are laid asleep!  
But, O fair Creature! in the light 15  
Of common day, so heavenly bright,  
I bless Thee, Vision as thou art,  
I bless thee with a human heart;  
God shield thee to thy latest years!  
Thee, neither know I, nor thy peers; 20  
And yet my eyes are filled with tears.

With earnest feeling I shall pray  
For thee when I am far away:  
For never saw I mien, or face,  
In which more plainly I could trace 25  
Benignity and home-bred sense  
Ripening in perfect innocence.  
Here scattered, like a random seed,  
Remote from men, Thou dost not need  
The embarrassed look of shy distress, 30  
And maidenly shamefacedness:  
Thou wear'st upon thy forehead clear  
The freedom of a Mountaineer:  
A face with gladness overspread!  
Soft smiles, by human kindness bred! 35  
And seemliness complete, that sways  
Thy courtesies, about thee plays;  
With no restraint, but such as springs  
From quick and eager visitings  
Of thoughts that lie beyond the reach 40  
Of thy few words of English speech:  
A bondage sweetly brooked, a strife  
That gives thy gestures grace and life!  
So have I, not unmoved in mind,  
Seen birds of tempest-loving kind— 45  
Thus beating up against the wind.

What hand but would a garland cull  
For thee who art so beautiful?  
O happy pleasure! here to dwell  
Beside thee in some heathy dell;  
Adopt your homely ways, and dress, 50  
A Shepherd, thou a Shepherdess!

But I could frame a wish for thee  
More like a grave reality:  
Thou art to me but as a wave 55  
Of the wild sea; and I would have  
Some claim upon thee, if I could,  
Though but of common neighbourhood.  
What joy to hear thee, and to see!  
Thy elder Brother I would be, 60  
Thy Father—anything to thee!

Now thanks to Heaven! that of its  
grace  
Hath led me to this lonely place.  
Joy have I had; and going hence  
I bear away my recompense. 65  
In spots like these it is we prize  
Our Memory, feel that she hath eyes:  
Then, why should I be loth to stir?  
I feel this place was made for her;  
To give new pleasure like the past, 70  
Continued long as life shall last.  
Nor am I loth, though pleased at heart,  
Sweet Highland Girl! from thee to part;  
For I, methinks, till I grow old,  
As fair before me shall behold, 75  
As I do now, the cabin small,  
The lake, the bay, the waterfall;  
And Thee, the Spirit of them all!

## VII.

## GLEN ALMAIN;

## OR, THE NARROW GLEN.

[Composed probably 1803.—Published 1807.]

In this still place, remote from men,  
Sleeps Ossian, in the NARROW GLEN;  
In this still place, where murmurs on  
But one meek streamlet, only one:  
He sang of battles, and the breath 5  
Of stormy war, and violent death;  
And should, methinks, when all was past,  
Have rightfully been laid at last  
Where rocks were rudely heaped, and  
rent  
As by a spirit turbulent; 10  
Where sights were rough, and sounds  
were wild,  
And everything unreconciled;  
In some complaining, dim retreat,  
For fear and melancholy meet;

But this is calm ; there cannot be 15  
A more entire tranquillity.

Does then the Bard sleep here indeed ?  
Or is it but a groundless creed ?  
What matters it ?—I blame them not  
Whose Fancy in this lonely Spot 20  
Was moved ; and in such way expressed  
Their notion of its perfect rest.  
A convent, even a hermit's cell,  
Would break the silence of this Dell :  
It is not quiet, is not ease ; 25  
But something deeper far than these :  
The separation that is here  
Is of the grave ; and of austere  
Yet happy feelings of the dead :  
And, therefore, was it rightly said 30  
That Ossian, last of all his race !  
Lies buried in this lonely place.

# VIII.

## STEPPING WESTWARD.

[Composed between 1808-1805.—Published 1807.]

While my Fellow-traveller and I were walking  
by the side of Loch Ketterine, one fine evening  
after sunset, in our road to a Hut where, in the  
course of our Tour, we had been hospitably  
entertained some weeks before, we met, in one  
of the loneliest parts of that solitary region,  
two well-dressed Women, one of whom said to  
us, by way of greeting, "What, you are step-  
ping westward ?"

"WHAT, you are stepping westward?"—  
"Yea."

—"Twould be a *wildish* destiny,  
If we, who thus together roam  
In a strange Land, and far from home,  
Were in this place the guests of Chance : 5  
Yet who would stop, or fear to advance,  
Though home or shelter he had none,  
With such a sky to lead him on ?

The dewy ground was dark and cold ;  
Behind, all gloomy to behold ; 10  
And stepping westward seemed to be  
A kind of *heavenly* destiny :  
I liked the greeting ; 'twas a sound  
Of something without place or bound ;  
And seemed to give me spiritual right 15  
To travel through that region bright.

The voice was soft, and she who spake  
Was walking by her native lake :  
The salutation had to me  
The very sound of courtesy : 20  
Its power was felt ; and while my eye  
Was fixed upon the glowing Sky,  
The echo of the voice enwrought  
A human sweetness with the thought  
Of travelling through the world that lay  
Before me in my endless way. 25

# IX.

## THE SOLITARY REAPER.

[Composed between 1803-1805.—Published 1807.]

BEHOLD her, single in the field,  
Yon solitary Highland Lass !  
Reaping and singing by herself ;  
Stop here, or gently pass !  
Alone she cuts and binds the grain, 5  
And sings a melancholy strain ;  
O listen ! for the Vale profound  
Is overflowing with the sound.

No Nightingale did ever chaunt  
More welcome notes to weary bands 10  
Of travellers in some shady haunt,  
Among Arabian sands :  
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard  
In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird,  
Breaking the silence of the seas 15  
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?—  
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow  
For old, unhappy, far-off things,  
And battles long ago : 20  
Or is it some more humble lay,  
Familiar matter of to-day ?  
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,  
That has been, and may be again ?

Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang 25  
As if her song could have no ending ;  
I saw her singing at her work,  
And o'er the sickle bending ;—  
I listened, motionless and still ;  
And, as I mounted up the hill, 30  
The music in my heart I bore,  
Long after it was heard no more.

## X.

ADDRESS TO KILCHURN CASTLE,  
UPON LOCH AWE.

[Composed ll. 1-3, 1803; finished "long after."—  
Published 1827.]

"From the top of the hill a most impressive scene opened upon our view,—a ruined Castle on an Island (for an Island the flood had made it) at some distance from the shore, backed by a Cove of the Mountain Cruachan, down which came a foaming stream. The Castle occupied every foot of the Island that was visible to us, appearing to rise out of the water,—mists rested upon the mountain side, with spots of sunshine; there was a mild desolation in the low grounds, a solemn grandeur in the mountains, and the Castle was wild, yet stately—not dismantled of turrets—nor the walls broken down, though obviously a ruin."—*Extract from the Journal of my Companion.*

CHILD of loud-throated War! the mountain Stream

Roars in thy hearing; but thy hour of rest  
Is come, and thou art silent in thy age;  
Save when the wind sweeps by and  
sounds are caught

Ambiguous, neither wholly thine nor  
theirs. 5

Oh! there is life that breathes not;  
Powers there are

That touch each other to the quick in  
modes

Which the gross world no sense hath to  
perceive,

No soul to dream of. What art Thou,  
from care

Cast off—abandoned by thy rugged Sire,  
Nor by soft Peace adopted; though, in  
place 11

And in dimension, such that thou might'st  
seem

But a mere footstool to yon sovereign  
Lord,

Huge Cruachan, (a thing that meaner hills  
Might crush, nor know that it had suffered  
harm;) 15

Yet he, not loth, in favour of thy claims  
To reverence, suspends his own; submit-  
ting

All that the God of Nature hath con-  
ferred,

All that he holds in common with the stars,  
To the memorial majesty of Time 20  
Impersonated in thy calm decay!  
Take, then, thy seat, Vicegerent unre-  
proved!

Now, while a farewell gleam of evening  
light

Is fondly lingering on thy shattered front,  
Do thou, in turn, be paramount; and rule  
Over the pomp and beauty of a scene 26  
Whose mountains, torrents, lake, and  
woods, unite

To pay thee homage; and with these are  
joined,

In willing admiration and respect,  
Two Hearts, which in thy presence might  
be called 30

Youthful as Spring.—Shade of departed  
Power,

Skeleton of unflashed humanity,  
The chronicle were welcome that should  
call

Into the compass of distinct regard  
The toils and struggles of thy infant  
years! 35

Yon foaming flood seems motionless as ice;  
Its dizzy turbulence eludes the eye,  
Frozen by distance; so, majestic Pile,  
To the perception of this Age, appear  
Thy fierce beginnings, softened and sub-  
dued 40

And quieted in character—the strife,  
The pride, the fury uncontrollable,  
Lost on the aerial heights of the Cru-  
sades! 1

## XI.

## ROB ROY'S GRAVE.

[Composed between September, 1803–April, 1805.  
—Published 1807.]

The history of Rob Roy is sufficiently known;  
his grave is near the head of Loch Ketterline,  
in one of those small pinfold-like Burial-  
grounds, of neglected and desolate appearance,  
which the traveller meets with in the High-  
lands of Scotland.

A FAMOUS man is Robin Hood,  
The English ballad-singer's joy!

<sup>1</sup> The tradition is, that the Castle was built by  
a Lady during the absence of her Lord in Pal-  
estine.

And Scotland has a thief as good,  
An outlaw of as daring mood ;  
She has her brave ROB ROY !  
Then clear the weeds from off his  
Grave,

And let us chant a passing stave,  
In honour of that Hero brave !

Heaven gave Rob Roy a dauntless heart  
And wondrous length and strength of  
arm :

Nor craved he more to quell his foes,  
Or keep his friends from harm.

Yet was Rob Roy as *wise* as brave ;  
Forgive me if the phrase be strong :—  
A Poet worthy of Rob Roy  
Must scorn a timid song.

Say, then, that he was wise as brave ;  
As wise in thought as bold in deed :  
For in the principles of things  
*He* sought his moral creed.

Said generous Rob, "What need of books?  
Burn all the statutes and their shelves :  
They stir us up against our kind ;  
And worse, against ourselves.

"We have a passion—make a law,  
Too false to guide us or control !  
And for the law itself we fight  
In bitterness of soul.

"And, puzzled, blinded thus, we lose  
Distinctions that are plain and few :  
These find I graven on my heart :  
*That* tells me what to do.

"The creatures see of flood and field,  
And those that travel on the wind !  
With them no strife can last ; they  
live  
In peace, and peace of mind.

"For why ?—because the good old rule  
Sufficeth them, the simple plan,  
That they should take, who have the  
power,  
And they should keep who can.

"A lesson that is quickly learned,  
A signal this which all can see !  
Thus nothing here provokes the strong  
To wanton cruelty.

"All freakishness of mind is checked ;  
He tamed, who foolishly aspires ;  
While to the measure of his might  
Each fashions his desires.

"All kinds, and creatures, stand and fall  
By strength of prowess or of wit :  
'Tis God's appointment who must sway,  
And who is to submit.

"Since, then, the rule of right is plain,  
And longest life is but a day ;  
To have my ends, maintain my rights,  
I'll take the shortest way."

And thus among these rocks he lived,  
Through summer heat and winter snow :  
The Eagle, he was lord above,  
And Rob was lord below.

So was it—*would*, at least, have been  
But through untowardness of fate ;  
For Polity was then too strong—  
He came an age too late ;

Or shall we say an age too soon ?  
For, were the bold Man living *now*,  
How might he flourish in his pride,  
With buds on every bough !

Then rents and factors, rights of chase,  
Sheriffs, and lairds and their domains,  
Would all have seemed but paltry things,  
Not worth a moment's pains.

Rob Roy had never lingered here,  
To these few meagre Vales confined ;  
But thought how wide the world, the  
times  
How fairly to his mind !

And to his Sword he would have said,  
"Do Thou my sovereign will enact  
From land to land through half the earth !  
Judge thou of law and fact !

"'Tis fit that we should do our part,  
Becoming that mankind should learn  
That we are not to be surpassed  
In fatherly concern.

"Of old things all are over old,  
Of good things none are good enough :—  
We'll show that we can help to frame  
A world of other stuff.

"I, too, will have my kings that take  
From me the sign of life and death : 90  
Kingdoms shall shift about, like clouds,  
Obedient to my breath."

And, if the word had been fulfilled,  
As *might* have been, then, thought of joy!  
France would have had her present Boast,  
And we our own Rob Roy ! 96

Oh ! say not so ; compare them not ;  
I would not wrong thee, Champion brave !  
Would wrong thee nowhere ; least of all  
Here standing by thy grave. 100

For Thou, although with some wild  
thoughts,  
Wild Chieftain of a savage Clan !  
Hadst this to boast of ; thou didst love  
The *liberty* of man.

And, had it been thy lot to live 105  
With us who now behold the light,  
Thou wouldst have nobly stirred thyself,  
And battled for the Right.

For thou wert still the poor man's stay,  
The poor man's heart, the poor man's  
hand ; 110  
And all the oppressed, who wanted  
strength,  
Had thine at their command.

Bear witness many a pensive sigh  
Of thoughtful Herdsman when he strays  
Alone upon Loch Veol's heights, 115  
And by Loch Lomond's braes.

And, far and near, through vale and hill,  
Are faces that attest the same ;  
The proud heart flashing through the eyes,  
At sound of ROB ROY's name. 120

## XII

### SONNET.

COMPOSED AT ——— CASTLE.

[Composed September 18, 1803.—Published 1807.]

DEGENERATE Douglas ! oh, the unworthy  
Lord !

Whom mere despite of heart could so  
far please,

And love of havoc, (for with such disease

Fame taxes him,) that he could send  
forth word

To level with the dust a noble horde, 5  
A brotherhood of venerable Trees,  
Leaving an ancient dome, and towers  
like these,

Beggared and outraged !—Many hearts  
deplored

The fate of those old Trees ; and oft  
with pain

The traveller, at this day, will stop and  
gaze 10

On wrongs, which Nature scarcely seems  
to heed :

For sheltered places, bosoms, nooks, and  
bays,

And the pure mountains, and the gentle  
Tweed,

And the green silent pastures, yet remain.

## XIII.

### YARROW UNVISITED.

[Composed 1803.—Published 1807.]

See the various Poems the scene of which is laid  
upon the banks of the Yarrow ; in particular,  
the exquisite Ballad of Hamilton beginning—  
"Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny, bonny Bride,  
Busk ye, busk ye, my winsome Marrow !"

FROM Stirling castle we had seen  
The mazy Forth unravelled ;  
Had trod the banks of Clyde, and Tay,  
And with the Tweed had travelled ;  
And when we came to Clovenford, 5  
Then said my "*winsome Marrow*,"  
"Whate'er betide, we'll turn aside,  
And see the Braes of Yarrow."

"Let Yarrow folk, *fræe* Selkirk town,  
Who have been buying, selling, 10  
Go back to Yarrow, 'tis their own ;  
Each maiden to her dwelling !  
On Yarrow's banks let herons feed,  
Hares couch, and rabbits burrow !  
But we will downward with the Tweed, 15  
Nor turn aside to Yarrow.

"There's Galla Water, Leader Haughs,  
Both lying right before us ;  
And Dryborough, where with chiming  
Tweed

The lintwhites sing in chorus, 20

There's pleasant Tiviot-dale, a land  
Made blithe with plough and harrow :  
Why throw away a needful day  
To go in search of Yarrow ?

"What's Yarrow but a river bare, 25  
That glides the dark hills under?  
There are a thousand such elsewhere  
As worthy of your wonder."  
—Strange words they seemed of slight  
and scorn;

My True-love sighed for sorrow ; 30  
And looked me in the face, to think  
I thus could speak of Yarrow !

"Oh! green," said I, "are Yarrow's  
holms,  
And sweet is Yarrow flowing !  
Fair hangs the apple frae the rock,<sup>1</sup> 35  
But we will leave it growing.  
O'er hilly path, and open Strath,  
We'll wander Scotland thorough ;  
But, though so near, we will not turn  
Into the dale of Yarrow. 40

"Let beeves and home-bred kine partake  
The sweets of Burn-mill meadow ;  
The swan on still St. Mary's Lake  
Float double, swan and shadow !  
We will not see them ; will not go, 45  
To-day, nor yet to-morrow ;  
Enough if in our hearts we know  
There's such a place as Yarrow.

"Be Yarrow stream unseen, unknown !  
It must, or we shall rue it : 50  
We have a vision of our own ;  
Ah ! why should we undo it ?  
The treasured dreams of times long past,  
We'll keep them, winsome Marrow !  
For when we're there, although 'tis fair,  
'Twill be another Yarrow ! 56

"If Care with freezing years should come,  
And wandering seem but folly,—  
Should we be loth to stir from home,  
And yet be melancholy ; 60  
Should life be dull, and spirits low,  
'Twill soothe us in our sorrow,  
That earth hath something yet to show,  
The bonny holms of Yarrow !"

<sup>1</sup> See Hamilton's Ballad as above.

# XIV.

## SONNET.

IN THE PASS OF KILLICRANKY.

An invasion being expected, October, 1803.

[Composed October, 1803.—Published 1807.]

Six thousand veterans practised in war's  
game,

Tried men, at Killicranky were arrayed  
Against an equal host that wore the plaid,  
Shepherds and herdsmen.—Like a whirl-  
wind came

The Highlanders, the slaughter spread  
like flame ; 5

And Garry, thundering down his moun-  
tain-road,

Was stopped, and could not breathe  
beneath the load

Of the dead bodies.—'Twas a day of shame  
For them whom precept and the pedantry  
Of cold mechanic battle do enslave. 10  
O for a single hour of that Dundee,

Who on that day the word of onset gave !  
Like conquest would the Men of Eng-  
land see ;

And her Foes find a like inglorious grave.

# XV.

## THE MATRON OF JEDBOROUGH AND HER HUSBAND.

[Composed between 1803-1805.—Published 1807.]

At Jedborough, my companion and I went into  
private lodgings for a few days ; and the fol-  
lowing Verses were called forth by the charac-  
ter and domestic situation of our Hostess.

AGE! twine thy brows with fresh spring  
flowers,

And call a train of laughing Hours ;  
And bid them dance, and bid them sing ;  
And thou, too, mingle in the ring !

Take to thy heart a new delight ; 5  
If not, make merry in despite

That there is One who scorns thy power :—  
But dance ! for under Jedborough Tower

A Matron dwells who, though she bears  
The weight of more than seventy years, 10

Lives in the light of youthful glee,  
And she will dance and sing with thee.

Nay! start not at that Figure—there!  
 Him who is rooted to his chair!  
 Look at him—look again! for he  
 Hath long been of thy family.  
 With legs that move not, if they can,  
 And useless arms, a trunk of man,  
 He sits, and with a vacant eye;  
 A sight to make a stranger sigh!  
 Deaf, drooping, that is now his doom:  
 His world is in this single room:  
 Is this a place for mirthful cheer?  
 Can merry-making enter here?

The joyous Woman is the Mate  
 Of him in that forlorn estate!  
 He breathes a subterraneous damp;  
 But bright as Vesper shines her lamp:  
 He is as mute as Jedborough Tower:  
 She jocund as it was of yore,  
 With all its bravery on; in times  
 When, all alive with merry chimes,  
 Upon a sun-bright morn of May,  
 It roused the Vale to holiday.

I praise thee, Matron! and thy due  
 Is praise, heroic praise, and true!  
 With admiration I behold  
 Thy gladness unsubdued and bold:  
 Thy looks, thy gestures, all present  
 The picture of a life well spent:  
 This do I see; and something more;  
 A strength unthought of heretofore!  
 Delighted am I for thy sake;  
 And yet a higher joy partake:  
 Our Human-nature throws away  
 Its second twilight, and looks gay;  
 A land of promise and of pride  
 Unfolding, wide as life is wide.

Ah! see her helpless Charge! enclosed  
 Within himself as seems, composed;  
 To fear of loss, and hope of gain,  
 The strife of happiness and pain,  
 Utterly dead! yet in the guise  
 Of little infants, when their eyes  
 Begin to follow to and fro  
 The persons that before them go,  
 He tracks her motions, quick or slow.  
 Her buoyant spirit can prevail  
 Where common cheerfulness would fail;  
 She strikes upon him with the heat  
 Of July suns; he feels it sweet;

An animal delight though dim!  
 'Tis all that now remains for him!

The more I looked, I wondered more—  
 And, while I scanned them o'er and o'er,  
 Some inward trouble suddenly  
 Broke from the Matron's strong black  
 eye—

A remnant of uneasy light,  
 A flash of something over-bright!  
 Nor long this mystery did detain  
 My thoughts;—she told in pensive strain  
 That she had borne a heavy yoke,  
 Been stricken by a twofold stroke;  
 Ill health of body; and had pined  
 Beneath worse ailments of the mind.

So be it!—but let praise ascend  
 To Him who is our lord and friend!  
 Who from disease and suffering  
 Hath called for thee a second spring;  
 Repaid thee for that sore distress  
 By no untimely joyousness;  
 Which makes of thine a blissful state;  
 And cheers thy melancholy Mate!

## XVI.

[Composed September 25, 1803.—Published 1815.]

FLY, some kind Harbinger, to Grasmere-  
 dale!

Say that we come, and come by this day's  
 light;

Fly upon swiftest wing round field and  
 height,

But chiefly let one Cottage hear the tale;  
 There let a mystery of joy prevail,

The kitten frolic, like a gamesome sprite,  
 And Rover whine, as at a second sight  
 Of near-approaching good that shall not  
 fail:

And from that Infant's face let joy  
 appear;

Yea, let our Mary's one companion child—  
 That hath her six weeks' solitude beguiled  
 With intimations manifold and dear,  
 While we have wandered over wood and  
 wild—

Smile on his Mother now with bolder  
 cheer.

XVII.

THE BLIND HIGHLAND BOY.

A TALE TOLD BY THE FIRE-SIDE, AFTER  
RETURNING TO THE VALE OF GRASMERE.

[Composed probably December, 1806.—Published  
1807.]

Now we are tired of boisterous joy,  
Have romped enough, my little Boy !  
Jane hangs her head upon my breast,  
And you shall bring your stool and rest ;  
This corner is your own. 5

There ! take your seat, and let me see  
That you can listen quietly :  
And, as I promised, I will tell  
That strange adventure which befell  
A poor blind Highland Boy. 10

A *Highland Boy* !—why call him so ?  
Because, my Darlings, ye must know  
That, under hills which rise like towers,  
Far higher hills than these of ours !  
He from his birth had lived. 15

He ne'er had seen one earthly sight ;  
The sun, the day ; the stars, the night ;  
Or tree, or butterfly, or flower,  
Or fish in stream, or bird in bower,  
Or woman, man, or child. 20

And yet he neither drooped nor pined,  
Nor had a melancholy mind ;  
For God took pity on the Boy,  
And was his friend ; and gave him joy  
Of which we nothing know. 25

His Mother, too, no doubt, above  
Her other children him did love :  
For was she here, or was she there,  
She thought of him with constant care,  
And more than mother's love. 30

And proud she was of heart, when clad  
In crimson stockings, tartan plaid,  
And bonnet with a feather gay,  
To Kirk he on the sabbath day  
Went hand in hand with her. 35

A dog, too, had he ; not for need,  
But one to play with and to feed ;  
Which would have led him, if bereft  
Of company or friends, and left  
Without a better guide. 40

And then the bagpipes he could blow—  
And thus from house to house would go ;  
And all were pleased to hear and see,  
For none made sweeter melody  
Than did the poor blind Boy. 45

Yet he had many a restless dream ;  
Both when he heard the eagles scream,  
And when he heard the torrents roar,  
And heard the water beat the shore  
Near which their cottage stood. 50

Beside a lake their cottage stood,  
Not small like ours, a peaceful flood ;  
But one of mighty size, and strange ;  
That, rough or smooth, is full of change,  
And stirring in its bed. 55

For to this lake, by night and day,  
The great Sea-water finds its way  
Through long, long windings of the hills,  
And drinks up all the pretty rills  
And rivers large and strong : 60

Then hurries back the road it came—  
Returns, on errand still the same ;  
This did it when the earth was new ;  
And this for evermore will do,  
As long as earth shall last. 65

And, with the coming of the tide,  
Come boats and ships that safely ride  
Between the woods and lofty rocks ;  
And to the shepherds with their flocks  
Bring tales of distant lands. 70

And of those tales, whate'er they were,  
The blind Boy always had his share ;  
Whether of mighty towns, or vales  
With warmer suns and softer gales,  
Or wonders of the Deep. 75

Yet more it pleased him, more it stirred,  
When from the water-side he heard  
The shouting, and the jolly cheers ;  
The bustle of the mariners  
In stillness or in storm. 80

But what do his desires avail ?  
For He must never handle sail ;  
Nor mount the mast, nor row, nor float  
In sailor's ship, or fisher's boat,  
Upon the rocking waves. 85

- His Mother often thought, and said,  
What sin would be upon her head  
If she should suffer this: "My Son,  
Whate'er you do, leave this undone;  
The danger is so great." 90
- Thus lived he by Loch Leven's side  
Still sounding with the sounding tide,  
And heard the billows leap and dance,  
Without a shadow of mischance,  
Till he was ten years old. 95
- When one day (and now mark me well,  
Ye soon shall know how this befell)  
He in a vessel of his own  
On the swift flood is hurrying down,  
Down to the mighty Sea. 100
- In such a vessel never more  
May human creature leave the shore!  
If this or that way he should stir,  
Woe to the poor blind Mariner!  
For death will be his doom. 105
- But say what bears him?—Ye have seen  
The Indian's bow, his arrows keen,  
Rare beasts, and birds with plumage  
bright;  
Gifts which, for wonder or delight,  
Are brought in ships from far. 110
- Such gifts had those seafaring men  
Spread round that haven in the glen;  
Each hut, perchance, might have its own;  
And to the Boy they all were known—  
He knew and prized them all. 115
- The rarest was a Turtle-shell  
Which he, poor Child, had studied well;  
A shell of ample size, and light  
As the pearly car of Amphitrite,  
That sportive dolphins drew. 120
- And, as a Coracle that braves  
On Vaga's breast the fretful waves,  
This shell upon the deep would swim,  
And gaily lift its fearless brim  
Above the tossing surge. 125
- And this the little blind Boy knew;  
And he a story strange yet true  
Had heard, how in a shell like this  
An English Boy, O thought of bliss!  
Had stoutly launched from shore; 130
- Launched from the margin of a bay  
Among the Indian isles, where lay  
His father's ship, and had sailed far—  
To join that gallant ship of war,  
In his delightful shell. 135
- Our Highland Boy oft visited  
The house that held this prize; and, led  
By choice or chance, did thither come  
One day when no one was at home,  
And found the door unbarred. 140
- While there he sate, alone and blind,  
That story flashed upon his mind;—  
A bold thought roused him, and he took  
The shell from out its secret nook,  
And bore it on his head. 145
- He launched his vessel,—and in pride  
Of spirit, from Loch Leven's side,  
Stepped into it—his thoughts all free  
As the light breezes that with glee  
Sang through the adventurer's hair.
- A while he stood upon his feet; 151  
He felt the motion—took his seat;  
Still better pleased as more and more  
The tide retreated from the shore,  
And sucked, and sucked him in. 155
- And there he is in face of Heaven.  
How rapidly the Child is driven!  
The fourth part of a mile, I ween,  
He thus had gone, ere he was seen  
By any human eye. 160
- But when he was first seen, oh me  
What shrieking and what misery!  
For many saw; among the rest  
His Mother, she who loved him best,  
She saw her poor blind Boy. 165
- But for the child, the sightless Boy,  
It is the triumph of his joy!  
The bravest traveller in balloon,  
Mounting as if to reach the moon,  
Was never half so blessed. 170
- And let him, let him go his way,  
Alone, and innocent, and gay!  
For, if good Angels love to wait  
On the forlorn unfortunate,  
This Child will take no harm. 175

But now the passionate lament,  
Which from the crowd on shore was sent,  
The cries which broke from old and young  
In Gaelic, or the English tongue,  
Are stifled—all is still. 180

And quickly with a silent crew  
A boat is ready to pursue;  
And from the shore their course they take,  
And swiftly down the running lake  
They follow the blind Boy. 185

But soon they move with softer pace;  
So have ye seen the fowler chase  
On Grasmere's clear unruffled breast  
A youngling of the wild-duck's nest  
With deftly-lifted oar; 190

Or as the wily sailors crept  
To seize (while on the Deep it slept)  
The hapless creature which did dwell  
Erewhile within the dancing shell,  
They steal upon their prey. 195

With sound the least that can be made,  
They follow, more and more afraid,  
More cautious as they draw more near;  
But in his darkness he can hear,  
And guesses their intent. 200

"*Lei-gha—Lei-gha*"—he then cried out,  
"*Lei-gha—Lei-gha*"—with eager shout;  
Thus did he cry, and thus did pray,  
And what he meant was "Keep away,  
And leave me to myself!" 205

Alas! and when he felt their hands—  
You've often heard of magic wands,  
That with a motion overthrow  
A palace of the proudest show,  
Or melt it into air: 210

So all his dreams—that inward light  
With which his soul had shone so bright—  
All vanished;—'twas a heart-felt cross  
To him, a heavy, bitter loss,  
As he had ever known. 215

But hark! a gratulating voice,  
With which the very hills rejoice:  
'Tis from the crowd, who tremblingly  
Have watched the event, and now can see  
That he is safe at last. 220

And then, when he was brought to land,  
Full sure they were a happy band,  
Which, gathering round, did on the banks  
Of that great Water give God thanks,  
And welcomed the poor Child. 225

And in the general joy of heart  
The blind Boy's little dog took part;  
He leapt about, and oft did kiss  
His master's hands in sign of bliss,  
With sound like lamentation. 230

But most of all, his Mother dear,  
She who had fainted with her fear,  
Rejoiced when waking she espies  
The Child; when she can trust her eyes,  
And touches the blind Boy. 235

She led him home, and wept amain,  
When he was in the house again:  
Tears flowed in torrents from her eyes;  
She kissed him—how could she chastise?  
She was too happy far. 240

Thus, after he had fondly braved  
The perilous Deep, the Boy was saved;  
And, though his fancies had been wild,  
Yet he was pleased and reconciled  
To live in peace on shore. 245

And in the lonely Highland dell  
Still do they keep the Turtle-shell;  
And long the story will repeat  
Of the blind Boy's adventurous feat,  
And how he was preserved. 250

*Note.*—It is recorded in "Dampier's Voyages,"  
that a boy, son of the captain of a Man-of-War,  
seated himself in a Turtle-shell, and floated in  
it from the shore to his father's ship, which lay  
at anchor at the distance of half a mile. In  
deference to the opinion of a Friend, I have  
substituted such a shell for the less elegant ves-  
sel in which my blind Voyager did actually en-  
trust himself to the dangerous current of Loch  
Leven, as was related to me by an eye-witness.

# MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN SCOTLAND,

1814.

## I.

SUGGESTED BY A BEAUTIFUL RUIN UPON  
ONE OF THE ISLANDS OF LOCH LOMOND,  
A PLACE CHOSEN FOR THE RETREAT OF  
A SOLITARY INDIVIDUAL, FROM WHOM  
THIS HABITATION ACQUIRED THE NAME  
OF

### THE BROWNIE'S CELL.

[Composed perhaps 1814.—Published 1820.]

## I.

To barren heath, bleak moor, and quaking  
fen,

Or depth of labyrinthine glen ;  
Or into trackless forest set  
With trees, whose lofty umbrage met ;  
World-weary'd Men withdrew of yore ; 5  
(Penance their trust, and prayer their  
store ;)

And in the wilderness were bound  
To such apartments as they found ;  
Or with a new ambition raised ;  
That God might suitably be praised. 10

## II.

High lodged the Warrior, like a bird of  
prey ;

Or where broad waters round him lay :  
But this wild Ruin is no ghost  
Of his devices—buried, lost !  
Within this little lonely isle 15  
There stood a consecrated Pile ;  
Where tapers burned, and mass was sung,  
For them whose timid Spirits clung  
To mortal succour, though the tomb  
Had fixed, for ever fixed, their doom ! 20

## III.

Upon those servants of another world  
When madding Power her bolts had  
hurled,

Their habitation shook ;—it fell,  
And perished, save one narrow cell ;  
Whither, at length, a Wretch retired 25  
Who neither grovelled nor aspired :  
He, struggling in the net of pride,  
The future scorned, the past defied ;  
Still tempering, from the unguilty forge  
Of vain conceit, an iron scourge ! 30

## IV.

Proud Remnant was he of a fearless Race,  
Who stood and flourished face to face  
With their perennial hills ;—but Crime,  
Hastening the stern decrees of Time,  
Brought low a Power, which from its  
home 35  
Burst, when repose grew wearisome ;  
And, taking impulse from the sword,  
And, mocking its own plighted word,  
Had found, in ravage widely dealt,  
Its warfare's bourn, its travel's belt ! 40

## V.

All, all were dispossessed, save him whose  
smile

Shot lightning through this lonely Isle !  
No right had he but what he made  
To this small spot, his leafy shade ;  
But the ground lay within that ring 45  
To which he only dared to cling ;  
Renouncing here, as worse than dead,  
The craven few who bowed the head

Beneath the change; who heard a claim  
How loud! yet lived in peace with  
shame. 50

VI.

From year to year this shaggy Mortal  
went

(So seemed it) down a strange descent:  
Till they, who saw his outward frame,  
Fixed on him an unhallowed name;  
Him, free from all malicious taint, 55  
And guiding, like the Patmos Saint,  
A pen unwearied—to indite,  
In his lone Isle, the dreams of night;  
Impassioned dreams, that strove to span  
The faded glories of his Clan! 60

VII.

Suns that through blood their western  
harbour sought,  
And stars that in their courses fought;  
Towers rent, winds combating with  
woods,  
Lands deluged by unbridled floods;  
And beast and bird that from the spell 65  
Of sleep took import terrible;—  
These types mysterious (if the show  
Of battle and the routed foe  
Had failed) would furnish an array  
Of matter for the dawning day! 70

VIII.

How disappeared He?—ask the newt and  
toad,  
Inheritors of his abode;  
The otter crouching undisturbed,  
In her dank cleft;—but be thou curbed,  
O froward Fancy! 'mid a scene 75  
Of aspect winning and serene;  
For those offensive creatures shun  
The inquisition of the sun!  
And in this region flowers delight,  
And all is lovely to the sight. 80

IX.

Spring finds not here a melancholy breast,  
When she applies her annual test  
To dead and living; when her breath  
Quickens, as now, the withered heath;—  
Nor flaunting Summer—when he throws  
His soul into the briar-rose; 86

Or calls the lily from her sleep  
Prolonged beneath the bordering deep;  
Nor Autumn, when the viewless wren  
Is warbling near the BROWNIE'S Den. 90

X.

Wild Relique! beauteous as the chosen  
spot  
In Nysa's isle, the embellished grot;  
Whither, by care of Libyan Jove,  
(High Servant of paternal Love)  
Young Bacchus was conveyed—to lie 95  
Safe from his step-dame Rhea's eye;  
Where bud, and bloom, and fruitage,  
glowed,  
Close-crowding round the infant-god;  
All colours,—and the liveliest streak  
A foil to his celestial cheek! 100

II.

COMPOSED AT CORA LINN,  
IN SIGHT OF WALLACE'S TOWER.

[Composed perhaps 1814.—Published 1820.]

“—How Wallace fought for Scotland, left the  
name  
Of Wallace to be found, like a wild-flower,  
All over his dear Country; left the deeds  
Of Wallace, like a family of ghosts,  
To people the steep rocks and river banks,  
Her natural sanctuaries, with a local soul  
Of independence and stern liberty.”—*M.S.*

LORD of the vale! astounding Flood;  
The dullest leaf in this thick wood  
Quakes—conscious of thy power;  
The caves reply with hollow moan;  
And vibrates, to its central stone, 5  
Yon time-cemented Tower!

And yet how fair the rural scene!  
For thou, O Clyde, hast ever been  
Beneficent as strong;  
Pleased in refreshing dews to steep 10  
The little trembling flowers that peep  
Thy shelving rocks among.

Hence all who love their country, love  
To look on thee—delight to rove  
Where they thy voice can hear; 15  
And, to the patriot-warrior's Shade,  
Lord of the vale! to Heroes laid  
In dust, that voice is dear!

Along thy banks, at dead of night  
Sweeps visibly the Wallace Wight; 20  
Or stands, in warlike vest,  
Aloft, beneath the moon's pale beam,  
A Champion worthy of the stream,  
Yon grey tower's living crest!

But clouds and envious darkness hide 25  
A Form not doubtfully desierd :—  
Their transient mission o'er,  
O say to what blind region flee  
These Shapes of awful phantasy?  
To what untrodden shore? 30

Less than divine command they spurn;  
But this we from the mountains learn,  
And this the valleys show;  
That never will they deign to hold  
Communion where the heart is cold 35  
To human weal and woe.

The man of abject soul in vain  
Shall walk the Marathonian plain;  
Or thrid the shadowy gloom,  
That still invests the guardian Pass, 40  
Where stood, sublime, Leonidas  
Devoted to the tomb.

And let no Slave his head incline,  
Or kneel, before the votive shrine  
By Uri's lake, where Tell 45  
Leapt, from his storm-vest boat, to land,  
Heaven's Instrument, for by his hand  
That day the Tyrant fell.

### III.

#### EFFUSION

IN THE PLEASURE-GROUND ON THE BANKS  
OF THE BRAN, NEAR DUNKELD.

[Composed 1814 (?).—Published 1827.]

"The waterfall, by a loud roaring, warned us  
when we must expect it. We were first, how-  
ever, conducted into a small apartment, where  
the Gardener desired us to look at a picture  
of Ossian, which, while he was telling the his-  
tory of the young Artist who executed the  
work, disappeared, parting in the middle—  
flying asunder as by the touch of magic—and  
lo! we are at the entrance of a splendid apart-  
ment, which was almost dizzy and alive with  
waterfalls, that tumbled in all directions; the  
great cascade, opposite the window, which  
faced us, being reflected in innumerable mir-

rors upon the ceiling and against the walls."—  
*Extract from the Journal of my Fellow-Tra-  
veller.*

WHAT He—who, mid the kindred throng  
Of Heroes that inspired his song,  
Doth yet frequent the hill of storms,  
The stars dim-twinkling through their  
forms!

What! Ossian here—a painted Thrall, 5  
Mute fixture on a stuccoed wall;  
To serve—an unsuspected screen  
For show that must not yet be seen;  
And, when the moment comes, to part  
And vanish by mysterious art; 10  
Head, harp, and body, split asunder,  
For ingress to a world of wonder:  
A gay saloon, with waters dancing  
Upon the sight wherever glancing;  
One loud cascade in front, and lo! 15  
A thousand like it, white as snow—  
Streams on the walls, and torrent-foam  
As active round the hollow dome,  
Illusive cataracts! of their terrors  
Not stripped, nor voiceless in the mirrors,  
That catch the pageant from the flood 21  
Thundering adown a rocky wood.  
What pains to dazzle and confound!  
What strife of colour, shape and sound  
In this quaint medley, that might seem 25  
Devised out of a sick man's dream!  
Strange scene, fantastic and uneasy  
As ever made a maniac dizzy,  
When disenchanted from the mood  
That loves on sullen thoughts to brood! 30

O Nature—in thy changeful visions,  
Through all thy most abrupt transitions  
Smooth, graceful, tender, or sublime—  
Ever averse to pantomime,  
Thee neither do they know nor vs 35  
Thy servants, who can trifle thus;  
Else verily the sober powers  
Of rock that frowns, and stream that  
roars,  
Exalted by congenial sway  
Of Spirits, and the undying Lay, 40  
And Names that moulder not away,  
Had wakened some redeeming thought  
More worthy of this favoured Spot;  
Recalled some feeling—to set free  
The Bard from such indignity! 45

The Effigies<sup>1</sup> of a valiant Wight  
 I once beheld, a Templar Knight;  
 Not prostrate, not like those that rest  
 On tombs, with palms together prest,  
 But sculptured out of living stone, 50  
 And standing upright and alone,  
 Both hands with rival energy  
 Employed in setting his sword free  
 From its dull sheath—stern sentinel  
 Intent to guard St. Robert's cell;  
 As if with memory of the affray 55  
 Far distant, when, as legends say,  
 The Monks of Fountain's thronged to  
 force  
 From its dear home the Hermit's corse,  
 That in their keeping it might lie,  
 To crown their abbey's sanctity.  
 So had they rushed into the grot  
 Of sense despised, a world forgot,  
 And torn him from his loved retreat,  
 Where altar-stone and rock-hewn seat 65  
 Still hint that quiet best is found,  
 Even by the *Living*, under ground;  
 But a bold Knight, the selfish aim  
 Defeating, put the Monks to shame,  
 There where you see his Image stand 70  
 Bare to the sky, with threatening brand  
 Which lingering Nid is proud to show  
 Reflected in the pool below.

Thus, like the men of earliest days,  
 Our sires set forth their grateful praise:  
 Uncouth the workmanship, and rude! 76  
 But, nursed in mountain solitude,  
 Might some aspiring artist dare  
 To seize what'er, through misty air,  
 A ghost, by glimpses, may present  
 Of imitable lineament,  
 And give the phantom an array  
 That less should scorn the abandoned clay;  
 Then let him hew with patient stroke  
 An Ossian out of mural rock, 85  
 And leave the figurative Man—  
 Upon thy margin, roaring Bran!—  
 Fixed, like the Templar of the steep,  
 An everlasting watch to keep;  
 With local sanctities in trust, 90  
 More precious than a hermit's dust;

And virtues through the mass infused,  
 Which old idolatry abused.  
 What though the Granite would deny  
 All fervour to the sightless eye; 95  
 And touch from rising suns in vain  
 Solicit a Memnonian strain;  
 Yet, in some fit of anger sharp,  
 The wind might force the deep-grooved  
 harp  
 To utter melancholy moans 100  
 Not unconnected with the tones  
 Of soul-sick flesh and weary bones;  
 While grove and river notes would lend,  
 Less deeply sad, with these to blend!  
 Vain pleasures of luxurious life, 105  
 For ever with yourselves at strife;  
 Through town and country both deranged  
 By affectations interchanged,  
 And all the perishable gauds  
 That heaven-deserted man applauds; 110  
 When will your hapless patrons learn  
 To watch and ponder—to discern  
 The freshness, the everlasting youth,  
 Of admiration sprung from truth;  
 From beauty infinitely growing 115  
 Upon a mind with love o'erflowing—  
 To sound the depths of every Art  
 That seeks its wisdom through the heart?

Thus (where the intrusive Pile, ill-  
 graced  
 With baubles of theatric taste, 120  
 O'erlooks the torrent breathing showers  
 On motley hands of alien flowers  
 In stiff confusion set or sown,  
 Till Nature cannot find her own,  
 Or keep a remnant of the sod 125  
 Which Caledonian Heroes trod)  
 I mused; and, thirsting for redress,  
 Recoiled into the wilderness.

#### IV.

#### YARROW VISITED.

SEPTEMBER, 1814.

[Composed 1814.—Published 1815.]

(See page 292.)

AND is this—Yarrow?—*This* the Stream  
 Of which my fancy cherished,  
 So faithfully, a waking dream?  
 An image that hath perished!

<sup>1</sup> On the banks of the river Nid, near Knareborough.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>O that some Minstrel's harp were near, 5<br/>         To utter notes of gladness,<br/>         And chase this silence from the air,<br/>         That fills my heart with sadness !</p> <p>Yet why ?—a silvery current flows<br/>         With uncontrolled meanderings ; 10<br/>         Nor have these eyes by greener hills<br/>         Been soothed, in all my wanderings.<br/>         And, through her depths, Saint Mary's<br/>         Lake<br/>         Is visibly delighted ;<br/>         For not a feature of those hills<br/>         Is in the mirror slighted. 15</p> <p>A blue sky bends o'er Yarrow vale,<br/>         Save where that pearly whiteness<br/>         Is round the rising sun diffused,<br/>         A tender hazy brightness ; 20<br/>         Mild dawn of promise ! that excludes<br/>         All profitless dejection ;<br/>         Though not unwilling here to admit<br/>         A pensive recollection.</p> <p>Where was it that the famous Flower 25<br/>         Of Yarrow Vale lay bleeding ?<br/>         His bed perchance was yon smooth mound<br/>         On which the herd is feeding :<br/>         And haply from this crystal pool,<br/>         Now peaceful as the morning,<br/>         The Water-wraith ascended thrice— 30<br/>         And gave his doleful warning.</p> <p>Delicious is the Lay that sings<br/>         The haunts of happy Lovers,<br/>         The path that leads them to the grove, 35<br/>         The leafy grove that covers :<br/>         And Pity sanctifies the Verse<br/>         That paints, by strength of sorrow,<br/>         The unconquerable strength of love ;<br/>         Bear witness, rueful Yarrow ! 40</p> <p>But thou, that didst appear so fair<br/>         To fond imagination,<br/>         Dost rival in the light of day<br/>         Her delicate creation :</p> | <p>Meek loveliness is round thee spread, 45<br/>         A softness still and holy ;<br/>         The grace of forest charms decayed,<br/>         And pastoral melancholy.</p> <p>That region left, the vale unfolds<br/>         Rich groves of lofty stature, 50<br/>         With Yarrow winding through the pomp<br/>         Of cultivated nature ;<br/>         And, rising from those lofty groves,<br/>         Behold a Ruin hoary !<br/>         The shattered front of Newark's Towers,<br/>         Renowned in Border story. 56</p> <p>Fair scenes for childhood's opening bloom,<br/>         For sportive youth to stray in ;<br/>         For manhood to enjoy his strength ;<br/>         And age to wear away in ! 60<br/>         Yon cottage seems a bower of bliss,<br/>         A covert for protection<br/>         Of tender thoughts, that nestle there—<br/>         The brood of chaste affection.</p> <p>How sweet, on this autumnal day, 65<br/>         The wild-wood fruits to gather,<br/>         And on my True-love's forehead plant<br/>         A crest of blooming heather !<br/>         And what if I enwreath'd my own !<br/>         'Twere no offence to reason ; 70<br/>         The sober Hills thus deck their brows<br/>         To meet the wintry season.</p> <p>I see—but not by sight alone,<br/>         Loved Yarrow, have I won thee ;<br/>         A ray of fancy still survives— 75<br/>         Her sunshine plays upon thee !<br/>         Thy ever-youthful waters keep<br/>         A course of lively pleasure ;<br/>         And gladsome notes my lips can breathe,<br/>         Accordant to the measure. 80</p> <p>The vapours linger round the Heights,<br/>         They melt, and soon must vanish ;<br/>         One hour is theirs, nor more is mine—<br/>         Sad thought, which I would banish,<br/>         But that I know, where'er I go, 85<br/>         Thy genuine image, Yarrow !<br/>         Will dwell with me—to heighten joy,<br/>         And cheer my mind in sorrow.</p> |
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# POEMS

## DEDICATED TO NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND LIBERTY.

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### PART I.

#### I.

COMPOSED BY THE SEA-SIDE, NEAR CALAIS,  
AUGUST, 1802.

[Composed August, 1802.—Published 1807.]

FAIR Star of evening, Splendour of the  
west,  
Star of my Country!—on the horizon's  
brink  
Thou hangest, stooping, as might seem,  
to sink  
On England's bosom; yet well pleased to  
rest,  
Meanwhile, and be to her a glorious  
crest  
Conspicuous to the Nations. Thou, I  
think,  
Shouldst be my Country's emblem; and  
shouldst wink,  
Bright Star! with laughter on her banners,  
dress  
In thy fresh beauty. There! that dusky  
spot  
Beneath thee, that is England; there she  
lies.  
Blessings be on you both! one hope, one  
lot,  
One life, one glory!—I, with many a fear  
For my dear Country, many heartfelt  
sighs,  
Among men who do not love her, linger  
here.

#### II.

CALAIS, AUGUST, 1802.

[Composed August, 1802.—Published January 29,  
1803 (*Morning Post* 1); 1807.]

Is it a reed that's shaken by the wind,  
Or what is it that ye go forth to see?  
Lords, lawyers, statesmen, squires of low  
degree,  
Men known, and, men unknown, sick,  
lame, and blind,  
Post forward all, like creatures of one  
kind,  
With first-fruit offerings crowd to bend  
the knee  
In France, before the new-born Majesty.  
'Tis ever thus. Ye men of prostrate mind,  
A seemly reverence may be paid to  
power;  
But that's a loyal virtue, never sown  
In haste, nor springing with a transient  
shower:  
When truth, when sense, when liberty  
were flown,  
What hardship had it been to wait an  
hour?  
Shame on you, feeble Heads, to slavery  
prone!

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<sup>1</sup> This Sonnet (II.), as well as Nos. IV., V., VIII., IX.,  
XVI. and XVII., appear in the *Morning Post* with  
the signature W. L. D.,—initials which probably  
stand for Wordsworthius Libertati dedicavit.—  
Ed.

## III.

COMPOSED NEAR CALAIS, ON THE ROAD  
LEADING TO ARDRES, AUGUST 7, 1802.

[Composed August, 1802.—Published 1807.]

JONES! as from Calais southward you  
and I

Went pacing side by side, this public  
Way

Streamed with the pomp of a too-credulous  
day<sup>1</sup>.

When faith was pledged to new-born  
Liberty:

A homeless sound of joy was in the sky: 5  
From hour to hour the antiquated Earth  
Beat like the heart of Man: songs, garlands, mirth,

Banners, and happy faces, far and nigh!  
And now, sole register that these things  
were,

Two solitary greetings have I heard, 10  
"Good morrow, Citizen!" a hollow word,  
As if a dead man spake it! Yet despair  
Touches me not, though pensive as a bird  
Whose vernal coverts winter hath laid  
bare<sup>2</sup>.

## IV.

1801.

[Composed May 21, 1802.—Published September 6,  
1802 (*Morning Post*); January 29, 1803 (*Ibid.*);  
1807.]

I GRIEVED for Buonaparté, with a vain  
And an unthinking grief! The tenderest  
mood

Of that Man's mind—what can it be?  
what food

Fed his first hopes? what knowledge  
could he gain?

'Tis not in battles that from youth we  
train 5

The Governor who must be wise and  
good,

And temper with the sternness of the  
brain

Thoughts motherly, and meek as woman-  
hood.

Wisdom doth live with children round  
her knees:

Books, leisure, perfect freedom, and the  
talk 10

Man holds with week-day man in the  
hourly walk

Of the mind's business: these are the  
degrees

By which true Sway doth mount; this is  
the stalk

True Power doth grow on; and her  
rights are these.

## V.

CALAIS, AUGUST 15, 1802.

[Composed August 15, 1802.—Published February  
26, 1803 (*Morning Post*); 1807.]

FESTIVALS have I seen that were not  
names:

This is young Buonaparté's natal day,  
And his is henceforth an established  
sway—

Consul for life. With worship France  
proclaims

Her approbation, and with pomps and  
games. 5

Heaven grant that other Cities may be gay!  
Calais is not: and I have bent my way

To the sea-coast, noting that each man  
frames

His business as he likes. Far other show  
My youth here witnessed, in a prouder  
time; 10

The senselessness of joy was then sub-  
lime!

Happy is he, who, caring not for Pope,  
Consul, or King, can sound himself to  
know

The destiny of Man, and live in hope.

## VI.

ON THE EXTINCTION OF THE VENETIAN  
REPUBLIC<sup>3</sup>.

[Composed probably August, 1802.—Published  
1807.]

ONCE did She hold the gorgeous east in  
fee;

And was the safeguard of the west: the  
worth

Of Venice did not fall below her birth,

<sup>1</sup> July 14, 1790

<sup>2</sup> See Note, p. 908

<sup>3</sup> By the treaty of Campo Formio, 1797.—ED.

Venice, the eldest Child of Liberty. 4  
 She was a maiden City, bright and free;  
 No guile seduced, no force could violate;  
 And, when she took unto herself a Mate,  
 She must espouse the everlasting Sea.  
 And what if she had seen those glories  
 fade,  
 Those titles vanish, and that strength  
 decay; 10  
 Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid  
 When her long life hath reached its final  
 day:  
 Men are we, and must grieve when even  
 the Shade  
 Of that which once was great is passed  
 away.

# VII.

## THE KING OF SWEDEN.

[Composed probably August, 1802.—Published  
 1807.]

THE Voice of song from distant lands  
 shall call  
 To that great King: shall hail the crownèd  
 Youth  
 Who, taking counsel of unbending Truth,  
 By one example hath set forth to all  
 How they with dignity may stand; or  
 fall, 5  
 If fall they must. Now, whither doth it  
 tend?  
 And what to him and his shall be the  
 end?  
 That thought is one which neither can  
 appal  
 Nor cheer him; for the illustrious Swede  
 hath done  
 The thing which ought to be; is raised  
 above 10  
 All consequences: work he hath begun  
 Of fortitude, and piety, and love,  
 Which all his glorious ancestors approve:  
 The heroes bless him, him their rightful  
 son<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> See note.—W. (The "crownèd Youth" was  
 Gustavus IV. of Sweden: born 1778; crownèd  
 1792; abdicated 1809. See Part II., Sonnets xx,  
 xxi.—Ed.)

# VIII.

## TO TOUSSAINT L'OUVRETURE<sup>2</sup>.

[Composed probably August, 1802.—Published  
 February 2, 1803 (*Morning Post*); 1807.]

TOUSSAINT, the most unhappy man of  
 men!  
 Whether the whistling Rustic tend his  
 plough  
 Within thy hearing, or thy head be now  
 Pillowed in some deep dungeon's earless  
 den;—  
 O miserable Chieftain! where and when  
 Wilt thou find patience! Yet die not;  
 do thou 6  
 Wear rather in thy bonds a cheerful  
 brow:  
 Though fallen thyself, never to rise again,  
 Live, and take comfort. Thou hast left  
 behind  
 Powers that will work for thee; air,  
 earth, and skies; 10  
 There's not a breathing of the common  
 wind  
 That will forget thee; thou hast great  
 allies;  
 Thy friends are exultations, agonies,  
 And love, and man's unconquerable mind.

# IX.

## SEPTEMBER 1, 1802.

[Composed September 1, 1802.—Published Feb-  
 ruary 11, 1803 (*Morning Post*); 1807.]

Among the capricious acts of tyranny that dis-  
 graced those times, was the chasing of all  
 Negroes from France by decree of the govern-  
 ment: we had a Fellow-passenger who was one  
 of the expelled.  
 We had a female Passenger who came  
 From Calais with us, spotless in array,—  
 A white-robed Negro, like a lady gay,  
 Yet downcast as a woman fearing blame;  
 Meek, destitute, as seemed, of hope or  
 aim 5

<sup>2</sup> François Dominique Toussaint, surnamed  
 L'Ouverture, was governor of St. Domingo, and  
 chief of the African slaves enfranchised by the  
 decree of the French Convention (1794). He re-  
 sisted Napoleon's edict re-establishing slavery in  
 St. Domingo, was arrested and sent to Paris in  
 June, 1802, and there died after ten months' im-  
 prisonment in April, 1803.—Ed.

She sate, from notice turning not away,  
 But on all proffered intercourse did lay  
 A weight of languid speech, or to the same  
 No sign of answer made by word or face:  
 Yet still her eyes retained their tropic fire,  
 That, burning independent of the mind,  
 Joined with the lustre of her rich attire 12  
 To mock the Outcast—O ye Heavens, be  
 kind!

And feel, thou Earth, for this afflicted Race!

## X.

COMPOSED IN THE VALLEY NEAR DOVER,  
 ON THE DAY OF LANDING.

[Composed August 30, 1802.—Published 1807.]

HERE, on our native soil, we breathe once  
 more.

The cock that crows, the smoke that curls,  
 that sound

Of bells;—those boys who in yon meadow-  
 ground

In white-sleeved shirts are playing; and  
 the roar

Of the waves breaking on the chalky  
 shore;— 5

All, all are English. Oft have I looked  
 round

With joy in Kent's green vales; but never  
 found

Myself so satisfied in heart before.

Europe is yet in bonds; but let that pass,  
 Thought for another moment. Thou art  
 free, 10

My Country! and 'tis joy enough and  
 pride

For one hour's perfect bliss, to tread the  
 grass

Of England once again, and hear and see,  
 With such a dear Companion at my side.

## XI.

SEPTEMBER, 1802. NEAR DOVER.

[Composed September, 1802.—Published 1807.]

INLAND, within a hollow vale, I stood;  
 And saw, while sea was calm and air was  
 clear,

The coast of France—the coast of France  
 how near!

Drawn almost into frightful neighbour-  
 hood.

I shrunk; for verily the barrier flood 5

Was like a lake, or river bright and fair,  
 A span of waters; yet what power is  
 there!

What mightiness for evil and for good!  
 Even so doth God protect us if we be  
 Virtuous and wise. Winds blow, and  
 waters roll, 10  
 Strength to the brave, and Power, and  
 Deity;

Yet in themselves are nothing! One de-  
 cree

Spake laws to *them*, and said that by the  
 soul

Only, the Nations shall be great and free.

## XII.

THOUGHT OF A BRITON ON THE SUBJUGA-  
 TION OF SWITZERLAND.

[Composed probably early in 1807.—Published  
 1807.]

Two Voices are there; one is of the sea,  
 One of the mountains; each a mighty  
 Voice:

In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,  
 They were thy chosen music, Liberty!

There came a Tyrant, and with holy glee 5  
 Thou fought'st against him; but hast  
 vainly striven:

Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art  
 driven,

Where not a torrent murmurs heard by  
 thee.

Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been  
 bereft:

Then cleave, O cleave to that which still  
 is left; 10

For, high-souled Maid, what sorrow would  
 it be

That Mountain floods should thunder as  
 before,

And Ocean bellow from his rocky shore,  
 And neither awful Voice be heard by  
 thee!

## XIII.

WRITTEN IN LONDON, SEPTEMBER, 1802.

[Composed September, 1802.—Published 1807.]

O FRIEND! I know not which way I must  
 look

For comfort, being, as I am, oppress'd,  
 To think that now our life is only drest

For show; mean handy-work of crafts-  
man, cook,  
Or groom!—We must run glittering like  
a brook 5  
In the open sunshine, or we are unblest:  
The wealthiest man among us is the best:  
No grandeur now in nature or in book  
Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,  
This is idolatry; and these we adore: 10  
Plain living and high thinking are no  
more:  
The homely beauty of the good old cause  
Is gone; our peace, our fearful innocence,  
And pure religion breathing household  
laws.

XIV.

LONDON, 1802.

[Composed September, 1802.—Published 1807.]

MILTON! thou shouldst be living at this  
hour:  
England hath need of thee: she is a fen  
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and  
pen,  
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and  
bower,  
Have forfeited their ancient English  
dower 5  
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;  
Oh! raise us up, return to us again;  
And give us manners, virtue, freedom,  
power.  
Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart;  
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like  
the sea: 10  
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,  
So didst thou travel on life's common way,  
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart  
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

XV.

[Composed probably 1802.—Published 1807.]

GREAT men have been among us; hands  
that penned  
And tongues that uttered wisdom—better  
none:  
The later Sidney, Marvel, Harrington,

Young Vane, and others who called Mil-  
ton friend.  
These moralists could act and compre-  
hend: 5  
They knew how genuine glory was put on;  
Taught us how rightfully a nation shone  
In splendour: what strength was, that  
would not bend  
But in magnanimous meekness. France,  
'tis strange,  
Hath brought forth no such souls as we  
had then. 10  
Perpetual emptiness! unceasing change!  
No single volume paramount, no code,  
No master spirit, no determined road;  
But equally a want of books and men!

XVI.

[Composed 1802 or 1803.—Published April 16,  
1803 (*Morning Post*); 1807.]

It is not to be thought of that the Flood  
Of British freedom, which, to the open sea  
Of the world's praise, from dark antiquity  
Hath flowed, "with pomp of waters, un-  
withstood," 4  
Roused though it be full often to a mood  
Which spurns the check of salutary bands,  
That this most famous Stream in bogs  
and sands  
Should perish; and to evil and to good  
Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung  
Armoury of the invincible Knights of old:  
We must be free or die, who speak the  
tongue 11  
That Shakspeare spake; the faith and  
morals hold  
Which Milton held.—In every thing we  
are sprung  
Of Earth's first blood, have titles mani-  
fold.

XVII.

[Composed 1802 or 1803.—Published September  
17, 1803 (*Morning Post*); 1807.]

WHEN I have borne in memory what has  
tamed  
Great Nations, how ennobling thoughts  
depart  
When men change swords for ledgers,  
and desert

The student's bower for gold, some fears  
unnamed  
I had, my Country—am I to be blamed?  
Now, when I think of thee, and what  
thou art, 6  
Verily, in the bottom of my heart,  
Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.  
For dearly must we prize thee; we who  
find  
In thee a bulwark for the cause of  
men; 10  
And I by my affection was beguiled:  
What wonder if a Poet now and then,  
Among the many movements of his mind,  
Felt for thee as a lover or a child!

## XVIII.

OCTOBER, 1803.

[Composed October, 1803.—Published 1807.]

ONE might believe that natural miseries  
Had blasted France, and made of it a land  
Unfit for men; and that in one great  
band  
Her sons were bursting forth, to dwell at  
ease.  
But 'tis a chosen soil, where sun and  
breeze 5  
Shed gentle favours: rural works are  
there,  
And ordinary business without care;  
Spot rich in all things that can soothe  
and please!  
How piteous then that there should be  
such dearth  
Of knowledge; that whole myriads should  
unite 10  
To work against themselves such fell  
despite:  
Should come in frenzy and in drunken  
mirth,  
Impatient to put out the only light  
Of Liberty that yet remains on earth!

## XIX.

[Composed 1803 (?).—Published 1807.]

THERE is a bondage worse, far worse, to  
bear  
Than his who breathes, by roof, and floor,  
and wall,  
Pent in, a Tyrant's solitary Thrall:

'Tis his who walks about in the open  
air,  
One of a Nation who, henceforth, must  
wear 5  
Their fetters in their souls. For who  
could be,  
Who, even the best, in such condition,  
free  
From self-reproach, reproach that he must  
share  
With Human-nature? Never be it ours  
To see the sun how brightly it will  
shine, 10  
And know that noble feelings, manly  
powers,  
Instead of gathering strength, must droop  
and pine;  
And earth with all her pleasant fruits  
and flowers  
Fade, and participate in man's decline.

## XX.

OCTOBER, 1803.

[Composed October, 1803.—Published 1807.]

THESE times strike monied worldlings  
with dismay:  
Even rich men, brave by nature, taint  
the air  
With words of apprehension and de-  
spair:  
While tens of thousands, thinking on the  
affray,  
Men unto whom sufficient for the day 5  
And minds not stinted or untilled are  
given,  
Sound, healthy, children of the God of  
heaven,  
Are cheerful as the rising<sup>g</sup> sun in  
May.  
What do we gather hence but firmer  
faith  
That every gift of noble origin 10  
Is breathed upon by Hope's perpetual  
breath;  
That virtue and the faculties within  
Are vital,—and that riches are akin  
To fear, to change, to cowardice, and  
death?

XXI.

[Composed probably 1803.—Published 1807.]

ENGLAND! the time is come when thou  
shouldst wean  
Thy heart from its emasculating food;  
The truth should now be better under-  
stood;  
Old things have been unsettled; we have  
seen  
Fair seed-time, better harvest might have  
been 5  
But for thy trespasses; and, at this day,  
If for Greece, Egypt, India, Africa,  
Aught good were destined, thou wouldst  
step between.  
England! all nations in this charge agree:  
But worse, more ignorant in love and  
hate, 10  
Far—far more object, is thine Enemy:  
Therefore the wise pray for thee, though  
the freight  
Of thy offences be a heavy weight:  
Oh grief that Earth's best hopes rest all  
with Thee!

XXII.

OCTOBER, 1803.

[Composed October, 1803.—Published 1807.]

WHEN, looking on the present face of  
things,  
I see one man, of men the meanest too!  
Raised up to sway the world, to do, undo,  
With mighty Nations for his underlings,  
The great events with which old story  
rings 5  
Seem vain and hollow; I find nothing  
great:  
Nothing is left which I can venerate;  
So that a doubt almost within me springs  
Of Providence, such emptiness at length  
Seems at the heart of all things. But,  
great God! 10  
I measure back the steps which I have  
trod;  
And tremble, seeing whence proceeds the  
strength  
Of such poor Instruments, with thoughts  
sublime  
I tremble at the sorrow of the time.

XXIII.

TO THE MEN OF KENT. OCTOBER, 1803.

[Composed Oct. 1803.—Published 1807.]

VANGUARD of Liberty, ye men of Kent,  
Ye children of a Soil that doth advance  
Her haughty brow against the coast of  
France,  
Now is the time to prove your hardiment!  
To France be words of invitation sent! 5  
They from their fields can see the coun-  
tenance  
Of your fierce war, may ken the glittering  
lance,  
And hear you shouting forth your brave  
intent.  
Left single, in bold parley, ye, of yore,  
Did from the Norman win a gallant  
wreath; 10  
Confirmed the charters that were yours  
before;—  
No parleying now. In Britain is one  
breath;  
We all are with you now from shore to  
shore;—  
Ye men of Kent, 'tis victory or death!

XXIV.

[Composed ?.—Published 1837.]

WHAT if our numbers barely could defy  
The arithmetic of babes, must foreign  
hordes,  
Slaves, vile as ever were befooled by  
words,  
Striking through English breasts the  
anarchy  
Of Terror, bear us to the ground, and tie  
Our hands behind our backs with felon  
cords? 6  
Yields every thing to discipline of swords?  
Is man as good as man, none low, none  
high?—  
Nor discipline nor valour can withstand  
The shock, nor quell the inevitable rout,  
When in some great extremity breaks  
out 11  
A people, on their own beloved Land  
Risen, like one man, to combat in the  
sight  
Of a just God for liberty and right.

## XXV.

## LINES ON THE EXPECTED INVASION.

1803.

[Composed 1803.—Published: vol. of 1842.]

COME ye—who, if (which Heaven avert!)  
the Land

Were with herself at strife, would take  
your stand,

Like gallant Falkland, by the Monarch's  
side,

And, like Montrose, make Loyalty your  
pride—

Come ye—who, not less zealous, might  
display

Banners at enmity with regal sway,  
And, like the Pym and Miltons of that  
day,

Think that a State would live in sounder  
health

If Kingship bowed its head to Common-  
wealth—

Ye too—whom no discreditable fear  
Would keep, perhaps with many a fruit-  
less tear,

Uncertain what to choose and how to  
steer—

And ye—who might mistake for sober  
sense

And wise reserve the plea of indolence—  
Come ye—whate'er your creed—O waken  
all,

Whate'er your temper, at your Country's  
call;

Resolving (this a free-born Nation can)  
To have one Soul, and perish to a man,  
Or save this honoured Land from every  
Lord

But British reason and the British sword.

## XXVI.

ANTICIPATION. OCTOBER, 1803.

[Composed October, 1803.—Published 1803 (*The Poetical Register*, iii. 340); 1804 (*The Anti-Gallican*); 1807.]

SHOUT, for a mighty Victory is won!

On British ground the Invaders are laid  
low;

The breath of Heaven has drifted them  
like snow,

And left them lying in the silent sun,  
Never to rise again!—the work is done.  
Come forth, ye old men, now in peaceful  
show

And greet your sons! drums beat and  
trumpets blow!

Make merry, wives! ye little children,  
stun

Your grandame's ears with pleasure of  
your noise!

Clap, infants, clap your hands! Divine  
must be

That triumph, when the very worst, the  
pain,

And even the prospect of our brethren  
slain,

Hath something in it which the heart  
enjoys:—

In glory will they sleep and endless  
sanctity.

## XXVII.

NOVEMBER, 1806.

[Composed 1806.—Published 1807.]

ANOTHER year!—another deadly blow!

Another mighty Empire<sup>1</sup> overthrown!

And We are left, or shall be left, alone;

The last that dare to struggle with the  
Foe.

'Tis well! from this day forward we shall  
know

That in ourselves our safety must be  
sought;

That by our own right hands it must be  
wrought;

That we must stand unpropped, or be  
laid low.

O dastard whom such foretaste doth not  
cheer!

We shall exult, if they who rule the land  
Be men who hold its many blessings  
dear,

Wise, upright, valiant; not a servile band,  
Who are to judge of danger which they  
fear,

And honour which they do not under-  
stand.

<sup>1</sup> Written after the overthrow of Prussia in the  
battle of Jena, October 14, 1806.—Ed.

XXVIII.

ODE.

I.

[Composed probably January, 1816.—Published:  
vol. of 1816.]

WHO rises on the banks of Seine,  
And binds her temples with the civic  
wreath?

What joy to read the promise of her mien!  
How sweet to rest her wide-spread wings  
beneath!

But they are ever playing, 5  
And twinkling in the light,  
And, if a breeze be straying,  
That breeze she will invite;

And stands on tiptoe, conscious she is  
fair,

And calls a look of love into her face, 10  
And spreads her arms, as if the general air  
Alone could satisfy her wide embrace.

—Melt, Principalities, before her melt!  
Her love ye hailed—her wrath have felt!

But She through many a change of form  
hath gone, 15

And stands amidst you now an armed  
creature,

Whose panoply is not a thing put on,  
But the live scales of a portentous nature;  
That, having forced its way from birth to  
birth,

Stalks round—abhorred by Heaven, a  
terror to the Earth! 20

II.

I marked the breathings of her dragon  
crest:

My Soul, a sorrowful interpreter,  
In many a midnight vision bowed

Before the ominous aspect of her spear;  
Whether the mighty beam, in scorn up-  
held, 25

Threatened her foes,—or, pompously at  
rest,

Seemed to bisect her orb'd shield,  
As stretches a blue bar of solid cloud

Across the setting sun and all the fiery  
west.

III.

So did she daunt the Earth, and God  
defy! 30

And, wheresoe'er she spread her sove-  
reignty,

Pollution tainted all that was most pure.  
—Have we not known—and live we not  
to tell—

That Justice seemed to hear her final  
knell?

Faith buried deeper in her own deep  
breast 35

Her stores, and sighed to find them  
insecure!

And Hope was maddened by the drops  
that fell

From shades, her chosen place of short-  
lived rest.

Shame followed shame, and woe sup-  
planted woe—

Is this the only change that time can  
show? 40

How long shall vengeance sleep? Ye  
patient Heavens, how long?

—Infirm ejaculation! from the tongue  
Of Nations wanting virtue to be strong

Up to the measure of accorded might,  
And daring not to feel the majesty of  
right! 45

IV.

Weak Spirits are there—who would ask,  
Upon the pressure of a painful thing,

The lion's sinews, or the eagle's wing;  
Or let their wishes loose, in forest-glade,

Among the lurking powers 50  
Of herbs and lowly flowers,

Or seek, from saints above, miraculous  
aid—

That Man may be accomplished for a  
task

Which his own nature hath enjoined;—  
and why?

If, when that interference hath relieved  
him, 55

He must sink down to languish  
In worse than former helplessness—and lie

Till the caves roar,—and imbecility  
Again engendering anguish,

The same weak wish returns, that had  
before deceived him. 60

## II.

UPON THE SAME EVENT.

[Composed ?.—Published 1815.]

WHEN, far and wide, swift as the beams  
of morn  
The tidings passed of servitude repealed,  
And of that joy which shook the Isth-  
mian Field,  
The rough Ætolians smiled with bitter  
scorn.  
" 'Tis known," cried they, "that he, who  
would adorn  
His envied temples with the Isthmian<sup>5</sup>  
crown,  
Must either win, through effort of his own,  
The prize, or be content to see it worn  
By more deserving brows.—Yet so ye prop,  
Sons of the brave who fought at Ma-  
rathon,<sup>10</sup>  
Your feeble spirits! Greece her head hath  
bowed,  
As if the wreath of liberty thereon  
Would fix itself as smoothly as a cloud,  
Which, at Jove's will, descends on Pe-  
lion's top."

## III.

TO THOMAS CLARKSON, ON THE FINAL PASS-  
ING OF THE BILL FOR THE ABOLITION OF  
THE SLAVE TRADE. MARCH, 1807.

[Composed March, 1807.—Published 1807.]

CLARKSON! it was an obstinate hill to  
climb:  
How toilsome—nay, how dire—it was, by  
thee  
Is known; by none, perhaps, so feelingly:  
But thou, who, starting in thy fervent  
prime,  
Didst first lead forth that enterprize sub-  
lime,<sup>5</sup>  
Hast heard the constant Voice its charge  
repeat,  
Which, out of thy young heart's oracular  
seat,  
First roused thee.—O true yoke-fellow  
of Time,  
Duty's intrepid liegeman, see, the palm<sup>9</sup>  
Is won, and by all Nations shall be worn!  
The blood-stained Writing is for ever torn;

And thou henceforth wilt have a good  
man's calm,  
A great man's happiness; thy zeal shall find  
Repose at length, firm friend of human  
kind!

IV.

A PROPHECY.

FEBRUARY, 1807.

[Composed 1807.—Published 1807.]

HIGH deeds, O Germans, are to come  
from you!

Thus in your books the record shall be  
found,

"A watchword was pronounced, a potent  
sound—

ARMINIUS!—all the people quaked like dew  
Stirred by the breeze; they rose, a Nation,  
true,

True to herself—the mighty Germany,  
She of the Danube and the Northern Sea,  
She rose, and off at once the yoke she  
threw.

All power was given her in the dreadful  
trance;

Those new-born Kings<sup>1</sup> she withered like  
a flame."

—Wee to them all! but heaviest woe and  
shame

To that Bavarian who could first advance  
His banner in accursed league with  
France,

First open traitor to the German name!

V.

COMPOSED BY THE SIEF OF GRASMER  
LAKE.

[Composed 1807.—Published 1819.]

CLOUDS, lingering yet, extend in solid bars  
Through the grey west; and lo! these  
waters, steeled

By breezeless air to smoothest polish, yield

<sup>1</sup> I.e. The heads of twelve sovereign houses of  
the Empire who, by treaty signed at Paris (July  
12, 1806) declared themselves finally severed from  
Germany, and united into the Confederation of  
the Rhine under the Protectorate of Napoleon.  
The *Bavarian* (line 12) was Frederick Augustus,  
Elector of Saxony, with whom Napoleon (Dec.  
11, 1806) concluded a treaty admitting him into  
the Confederation of the Rhine.—Ed.

A vivid repetition of the stars;  
Jove, Venus, and the ruddy crest of Mars  
Amid his fellows beautifully revealed  
At happy distance from earth's groaning  
field,

Where ruthless mortals wage incessant  
wars.

Is it a mirror?—or the nether Sphere  
Opening to view the abyss in which she  
feeds

Her own calm fires?—But list! a voice  
is near;

Great Pan himself low-whispering through  
the reeds,

"Be thankful, thou; for, if unholy deeds  
Ravage the world, tranquillity is here!"

VI.

[Composed ?.—Published 1827.]

Go back to antique ages, if thine eyes  
The genuine mien and character would  
trace

Of the rash Spirit that still holds her  
place,

Prompting the world's audacious vanities!  
Go back, and see the Tower of Babel rise;

The pyramid extend its monstrous base,  
For some Aspirant of our short-lived race,

Anxious an airy name to immortalize.  
There, too, ere wiles and politic dispute

Gave specious colouring to aim and act,  
See the first mighty Hunter leave the

brute—  
To chase mankind, with men in armies  
packed

For his field-pastime high and absolute,  
While, to dislodge his game, cities are  
sacked!

VII.

COMPOSED WHILE THE AUTHOR WAS EN-  
GAGED IN WRITING A TRACT OCCASIONED  
BY THE CONVENTION OF CINTR.

[Composed November or December, 1808.—  
Published 1815.]

Nor 'mid the World's vain objects that  
enslave

The free-born Soul—that World whose  
vaunted skill

In selfish interest perverts the will,

Whose factions lead astray the wise and  
 brave—  
 Not there; but in dark wood and rocky  
 cave,  
 And hollow vale which foaming torrents  
 fill  
 With omnipresent murmur as they rave  
 Down their steep beds, that never shall  
 be still:  
 Here, mighty Nature! in this school  
 sublime  
 I weigh the hopes and fears of suffering  
 Spain;  
 For her consult the auguries of time,  
 And through the human heart explore  
 my way;  
 And look and listen—gathering, whence  
 I may,  
 Triumph, and thoughts no bondage can  
 restrain.

## VIII.

COMPOSED AT THE SAME TIME AND ON THE  
 SAME OCCASION.

[Composed November or December, 1808.—  
 Published 1815.]

I DROPPED my pen; and listened to the  
 Wind  
 That sang of trees up-torn and vessels  
 tost—  
 A midnight harmony; and wholly lost  
 To the general sense of men by chains  
 confined  
 Of business, care, or pleasure; or re-  
 signed  
 To timely sleep. Thought I, the impas-  
 sioned strain,  
 Which, without aid of numbers, I sus-  
 tain,  
 Like acceptance from the World will  
 find.  
 Yet some with apprehensive ear shall  
 drink  
 A dirge devoutly breathed o'er sorrows  
 past;  
 And to the attendant promise will give  
 heed—  
 The prophecy,—like that of this wild  
 blast,

Which, while it makes the heart with  
 sadness shrink,  
 Tells also of bright calms that shall  
 succeed.

## IX.

HOFER<sup>1</sup>.

[Composed 1809.—Published Oct. 26, 1809 (*The  
 Friend*); 1815].

Of mortal parents is the Hero born  
 By whom the undaunted Tyrolese are led?  
 Or is it Tell's great Spirit, from the dead  
 Returned to animate an age forlorn?  
 He comes like Phœbus through the gates  
 of morn  
 When dreary darkness is discomfited,  
 Yet mark his modest state! upon his head,  
 That simple crest, a heron's plume, is worn.  
 O Liberty! they stagger at the shock  
 From van to rear—and with one mind  
 would flee,  
 But half their host is buried:—rock on  
 rock  
 Descends:—beneath this godlike War-  
 rior, see!  
 Hills, torrents, woods, embodied to be-  
 mock  
 The Tyrant, and confound his cruelty.

## X.

[Composed 1809.—Published October 26, 1809  
 (*The Friend*); 1815.]

ADVANCE—come forth from thy Tyrolean  
 ground,  
 Dear Liberty! stern Nymph of soul un-  
 tamed;  
 Sweet Nymph, O rightly of the moun-  
 tains named!  
 Through the long chain of Alps from  
 mound to mound  
 And o'er the eternal snows, like Echo,  
 bound;  
 Like Echo, when the hunter train at dawn  
 Have roused her from her sleep: and  
 forest-lawn,

<sup>1</sup> Andreas Hofer, an innkeeper, led the Tyro-  
 lese for a time successfully, but was defeated by  
 the Bavarians in October 1809, and tried by court-  
 martial and shot in 1810.—Ed.

Cliffs, woods and caves, her viewless steps  
resound  
And babble of her pastime!—On, dread  
Power!  
With such invisible motion speed thy  
fight,  
Through hanging clouds, from craggy  
height to height,  
Through the green vales and through the  
herdsman's bower—  
That all the Alps may gladden in thy  
might,  
Here, there, and in all places at one hour.

XI.

FEELINGS OF THE TYROLESE.

[Composed 1809.—Published December 21, 1809  
(*The Friend*); 1815.]

THE Land we from our fathers had in  
trust,  
And to our children will transmit, or die;  
This is our maxim, this our piety;  
And God and Nature say that it is just.  
That which we *would* perform in arms—  
we must!  
We read the dictate in the infant's eye;  
In the wife's smile; and in the placid sky;  
And, at our feet, amid the silent dust  
Of them that were before us.—Sing aloud  
Old songs, the precious music of the  
heart!  
Give, herds and flocks, your voices to the  
wind!  
While we go forth, a self-devoted crowd,  
With weapons grasped in fearless hands,  
to assert  
Our virtue, and to vindicate mankind.

XII.

[Composed 1809.—Published November 16, 1809  
(*The Friend*); 1815.]

ALAS! what boots the long laborious quest  
Of moral prudence, sought through good  
and ill;  
Or pains abstruse—to elevate the will,  
And lead us on to that transcendent rest  
Where every passion shall the sway  
attest

Of Reason, seated on her sovereign hill;  
What is it but a vain and curious skill,  
If sapient Germany must lie deprest,  
Beneath the brutal sword?—Her haughty  
Schools  
Shall blush; and may not we with sorrow  
say,  
A few strong instincts and a few plain  
rules,  
Among the herdsmen of the Alps, have  
wrought  
More for mankind at this unhappy day  
Than all the pride of intellect and  
thought?

XIII.

[Composed 1809.—Published December 21, 1809  
(*The Friend*); 1815.]

AND is it among rude untutored Dales,  
There, and there only, that the heart is  
true?  
And, rising to repel or to subdue,  
Is it by rocks and woods that man pre-  
vails?  
Ah no! though Nature's dread protection  
fails,  
There is a bulwark in the soul. This  
knew  
Iberian Burghers when the sword they  
drew  
In Zaragoza, naked to the gales  
Of fiercely-breathing war. The truth  
was felt  
By Palafox, and many a brave compeer,  
Like him of noble birth and noble mind;  
By ladies, meek-eyed women without  
fear;  
And wanderers of the street, to whom is  
dealt  
The bread which without industry they  
find.

XIV.

[Composed 1809.—Published December 21, 1809  
(*The Friend*); 1815.]

O'ER the wide earth, on mountain and on  
plain,  
Dwells in the affections and the soul of  
man  
A Godhead, like the universal PAN;

But more exalted, with a brighter train:  
 And shall his bounty be dispensed in  
     vain, 5  
 Showered equally on city and on field,  
 And neither hope nor steadfast promise  
     yield  
 In these usurping times of fear and  
     pain?  
 Such doom awaits us. Nay, forbid it  
     Heaven!  
 We know the arduous strife, the eternal  
     laws 10  
 To which the triumph of all good is  
     given,  
 High sacrifice, and labour without pause,  
 Even to the death:—else wherefore should  
     the eye  
 Of man converse with immortality?

## XV.

ON THE FINAL SUBMISSION OF THE  
TROLESE.

[Composed 1809.—Published December 21, 1809  
 (*The Friend*); 1815.]

It was a *moral* end for which they  
     fought;  
 Else how, when mighty Thrones were put  
     to shame,  
 Could they, poor Shepherds, have pre-  
     served an aim,  
 A resolution, or enlivening thought?  
 Nor hath that moral good been *vainly*  
     sought; 5  
 For in their magnanimity and fame  
 Powers have they left, an impulse, and a  
     claim  
 Which neither can be overturned nor  
     bought.  
 Sleep, Warriors, sleep! among your hills  
     repose!  
 We know that ye, beneath the stern  
     control 10  
 Of awful prudence, keep the unvan-  
     quished soul:  
 And when, impatient of her guilt and  
     woes,  
 Europe breaks forth; then, Shepherds!  
     shall ye rise  
 For perfect triumph o'er your Enemies.

## XVI.

[Composed 1809.—Published 1815.]

HAIL, Zaragoza! If with unwet eye  
 We can approach, thy sorrow to behold,  
 Yet is the heart not pitiless nor cold;  
 Such spectacle demands not tear or sigh.  
 These desolate remains are trophies high  
 Of more than martial courage in the breast  
 Of peaceful civic virtue: they attest  
 Thy matchless worth to all posterity.  
 Blood flowed before thy sight without  
     remorse;  
 Disease consumed thy vitals; War up-  
     heaved 10  
 The ground beneath thee with volcanic  
     force:  
 Dread trials! yet encountered and sus-  
     tained  
 Till not a wreck of help or hope remained,  
 And law was from necessity received<sup>1</sup>.

## XVII.

[Composed 1809 (?)—Published 1815.]

SAY, what is Honour?—'Tis the finest sense  
 Of *justice* which the human mind can frame;  
 Intent each lurking frailty to disclaim, 3  
 And guard the way of life from all offence  
 Suffered or done. When lawless violence  
 Invades a Realm, so pressed that in the  
     scale 6  
 Of perilous war her weightiest armies fall,  
 Honour is hopeful elevation,—whence  
 Glory, and triumph. Yet with *politics* skill  
 Endangered States may yield to terms  
     unjust; 10  
 Stoop their proud heads, but not unto  
     the dust—  
 A Foe's most favourite purpose to fulfil:  
 Happy occasions oft by self-mistrust  
 Are forfeited; but infamy dot<sup>2</sup> kill.

XVIII.<sup>2</sup>

[Composed October or November, 1809.—Pub-  
 lished 1815.]

THE martial courage of a day is vain,  
 An empty noise of death the battle's roar,  
 If vital hope be wanting to restore,

<sup>1</sup> Saragossa surrendered February 20, 1809.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> Written apparently on the occasion of the  
 Peace of Vienna, signed Oct. 10, 1809.—Ed.

Or fortitude be wanting to sustain,  
Armies or kingdoms. We have heard a  
strain 5  
Of triumph, how the labouring Danube  
bore  
A weight of hostile corpses: drenched  
with gore  
Were the wide fields, the hamlets heaped  
with slain.  
Yet see (the mighty tumult overpast)  
Austria a Daughter of her Throne hath  
sold! 10  
And her Tyrolean Champion we be-  
hold  
Murdered, like one ashore by shipwreck  
cast,  
Murdered without relief. Oh! blind as  
bold,  
To think that such assurance can stand  
fast!

XIX.

[Composed after May, 1809.—Published 1815.]

BRAVE Schill<sup>1</sup>! by death delivered, take  
thy flight  
From Prussia's timid region. Go, and  
rest  
With heroes, 'mid the islands of the  
Blest,  
Or in the fields of empyrean light.  
A meteor wert thou crossing a dark  
night: 5  
Yet shall thy name, conspicuous and  
sublime,  
Stand in the spacious firmament of time,  
Fixed as a star: such glory is thy right.  
Alas! it may not be: for earthly fame  
Is Fortune's frail dependant; yet there  
lives 10  
A Judge, who, as man claims by merit,  
gives;  
To whose all-pondering mind a noble  
aim,  
Faithfully kept, is as a noble deed;  
In whose pure sight all virtue doth suc-  
ceed.

<sup>1</sup> Killed at Stralsund, May 31, 1809.—Ed.

XX.

[Composed 1809.—Published 1815.]

CALL not the royal Swede<sup>2</sup> unfortunate,  
Who never did to Fortune bend the knee;  
Who slighted fear; rejected steadfastly  
Temptation; and whose kingly name and  
state  
Have "perished by his choice, and not  
his fate!" 5  
Hence lives He, to his inner self en-  
deared;  
And hence, wherever virtue is revered,  
He sits a more exalted Potentate,  
Throned in the hearts of men. Should  
Heaven ordain  
That this great Servant of a righteous  
cause 10  
Must still have sad or vexing thoughts to  
endure,  
Yet may a sympathising spirit pause,  
Admonished by these truths, and quench  
all pain  
In thankful joy and gratulation pure.

XXI.

[Composed 1809.—Published 1815.]

LOOK now on that Adventurer who hath  
paid  
His vows to Fortune; who, in cruel-slight  
Of virtuous hope, of liberty, and right,  
Hath followed wheresoe'er a way was  
made  
By the blind Goddess,—ruthless, undia-  
mayed; 5  
And so hath gained at length a prosper-  
ous height,  
Round which the elements of worldly  
might  
Beneath his haughty feet, like clouds, are  
laid.  
O joyless power that stands by lawless  
force!  
Curses are his dire portion, scorn, and  
hate, 10

<sup>2</sup> Gustavus IV. (see Part I, Sonnet vii.) abdi-  
cated early in 1809. In this and the following  
Sonnet he is contrasted with Napoleon. See  
Wordsworth's note to Sonnet vii., Part I. of this  
series.—Ed.

Internal darkness and unquiet breath ;  
 And, if old judgments keep their sacred  
     course,  
 Him from that height shall Heaven pre-  
     cipitate  
 By violent and ignominious death.

## XXII.

[Composed probably 1809.—Published 1815.]

Is there a power that can sustain and  
     cheer  
 The captive chieftain, by a tyrant's doom,  
 Forced to descend into his destined tomb—  
 A dungeon dark ! where he must waste  
     the year,  
 And lie cut off from all his heart holds  
     dear ;  
 What time his injured country is a stage  
 Whereon deliberate Valour and the rage  
 Of righteous Vengeance side by side ap-  
     pear,  
 Filling from morn to night the heroic  
     scene  
 With deeds of hope and everlasting  
     praise :—  
 Say can he think of this with mind serene  
 And silent fetters ? Yes, if visions bright  
 Shine on his soul, reflected from the days  
 When he himself was tried in open light.

## XXIII.

1810.

[Composed 1810.—Published 1815.]

Ah ! where is Palafox <sup>1</sup> ? Nor tongue nor  
     pen  
 Reports of him, his dwelling or his grave !  
 Does yet the unheard-of vessel ride the  
     wave ?  
 Or is she swallowed up, remote from ken  
 Of pitying human nature ? Once again

<sup>1</sup> Don Joseph Palafox-y-Melzi (1780-1847), famed for his stubborn defence of Saragossa, on the surrender of that fortress by the general to whom, owing to illness, he had been compelled to resign the command, was taken prisoner (February, 1809) and sent to Vincennes, where he was detained for nearly five years. On the restoration of Ferdinand VII. he was sent back to Madrid, and in 1814 was appointed Captain-General of Arragon ; but soon after retired into private life, from which he never again emerged.—Ed.

Methinks that we shall hail thee, Cham-  
     pion brave,  
 Redeemed to baffle that imperial Slave,  
 And through all Europe cheer desponding  
     men  
 With new-born hope. Unbounded is the  
     might  
 Of martyrdom, and fortitude, and right.  
 Hark, how thy Country triumphs !—  
     Smilingly  
 The Eternal looks upon her sword that  
     gleams,  
 Like his own lightning, over mountains  
     high,  
 On rampart, and the banks of all her  
     streams.

## XXIV.

[Composed 1810.—Published 1815.]

In due observance of an ancient rite,  
 The rude Biscayans, when their children lie  
 Dead in the sinless time of infancy,  
 Attire the peaceful corse in vestments  
     white ;  
 And, in like sign of cloudless triumph  
     bright,  
 They bind the unoffending creature's brows  
 With happy garlands of the pure white  
     rose :  
 Then do a festal company unite  
 In choral song ; and, while the uplifted  
     cross  
 Of Jesus goes before, the child is borne  
 Uncovered to his grave : 'tis closed,—her  
     loss  
 The Mother *then* mourns, as she needs  
     must mourn ;  
 But soon, through Christian faith, is grief  
     subdued :  
 And joy returns, to brighten fortitude.

## XXV.

FEELINGS OF A NOBLE BISCAYAN AT ONE OF  
 THOSE FUNERALS.

1810.

[Composed 1810.—Published 1815.]

YET, yet, Biscayans ! we must meet our  
     Foes  
 With firmer soul, yet labour to regain  
 Our ancient freedom ; else 'twere worse  
     than vain

To gather round the bier these festal  
shows.  
A garland fashioned of the pure white  
rose 5  
Becomes not one whose father is a  
slave:  
Oh, bear the infant covered to his grave!  
These venerable mountains now enclose  
A people sunk in apathy and fear.  
If this endure, farewell, for us, all good!  
The awful light of heavenly innocence  
Will fail to illuminate the infant's bier;  
And guilt and shame, from which is no  
defence,  
Descend on all that issues from our blood.

### XXVI.

#### THE OAK OF GUERNICA.

[Composed 1810.—Published 1815.]

The ancient oak of Guernica, says Laborde in  
his account of Biscay, is a most venerable  
natural monument. Ferdinand and Isabella,  
in the year 1476, after hearing Mass in the  
church of Santa Maria de la Antigua, repaired  
to this tree, under which they swore to the  
Biscayans to maintain their *fueros* (privileges).  
What other interest belongs to it in the minds  
of this people will appear from the following

SUPPOSED ADDRESS TO THE SAME. 1810.

OAK of Guernica! Tree of holier power  
Than that which in Dodona did enshrine  
(So faith too fondly deemed) a voice di-  
vine  
Heard from the depths of its aerial bower—  
How canst thou flourish at this blighting  
hour? 5  
What hope, what joy can sunshine bring  
to thee,  
Or the soft breezes from the Atlantic sea,  
The dews of morn, or April's tender  
shower?  
Stroke merciful and welcome would that  
be  
Which should extend thy branches on the  
ground, 10  
If never more within their shady round  
Those lofty-minded Lawgivers shall meet,  
Peasant and lord, in their appointed seat,  
Guardians of Biscay's ancient liberty.

### XXVII.

#### INDIGNATION OF A HIGH-MINDED SPANIARD.

1810.

[Composed 1810.—Published 1815.]

We can endure that He should waste our  
lands,  
Despoil our temples, and by sword and  
flame  
Return us to the dust from which we  
came;  
Such food a Tyrant's appetite demands;  
And we can brook the thought that by  
his hands 5  
Spain may be overpowered, and he possess,  
For his delight, a solemn wilderness  
Where all the brave lie dead. But, when  
of bands  
Which he will break for us he dares to  
speak,  
Of benefits, and of a future day 10  
When our enlightened minds shall bless  
his sway;  
Then, the strained heart of fortitude proves  
weak;  
Our groans, our blushes, our pale cheeks  
declare  
That he has power to inflict what we lack  
strength to bear.

### XXVIII.

[Composed probably 1810.—Published 1815.]

AVANT all specious pliancy of mind  
In men of low degree, all smooth pre-  
tence!  
I better like a blunt indifference,  
And self-respecting slowness, disinclined  
To win me at first sight: and be there  
joined 5  
Patience and temperance with this high  
reserve,  
Honour that knows the path and will not  
swerve;  
Affections which, if put to proof, are kind;  
And piety towards God. Such men of old  
Were England's native growth; and  
throughout Spain 10  
(Thanks to high God) forests of such re-  
main:

Then for that Country let our hopes be  
bold;  
For matched with these shall policy prove  
vain,  
Her arts, her strength, her iron, and her  
gold.

## XXIX.

1810.

[Composed 1810.—Published 1815.]

O'ERWEENING Statesmen have full long  
relied  
On fleets and armies, and external wealth:  
But from *within* proceeds a Nation's  
health;  
Which shall not fail, though poor men  
cleave with pride  
To the paternal floor; or turn aside, 5  
In the thronged city, from the walks of  
gain,  
As being all unworthy to detain  
A Soul by contemplation sanctified.  
There are who cannot languish in this  
strife,  
Spaniards of every rank, by whom the  
good 10  
Of such high course was felt and under-  
stood;  
Who to their Country's cause have bound  
a life  
Erewhile, by solemn consecration, given  
To labour, and to prayer, to nature, and  
to heaven<sup>1</sup>.

## XXX.

THE FRENCH AND THE SPANISH GUERRILLAS.

[Composed 1810 or 1811.—Published 1815.]

HUNGER, and sultry heat, and nipping blast  
From bleak hill-top, and length of march  
by night  
Through heavy swamp, or over snow-clad  
height—  
These hardships ill-sustained, these dan-  
gers past,  
The roving Spanish Bands are reached at  
last, 5

<sup>1</sup> See Laborde's character of the Spanish people; from him the sentiment of these last two lines is taken.

Charged, and dispersed like foam: but as  
a flight  
Of scattered quails by signs do reunite,  
So these,—and, heard of once again, are  
chased  
With combinations of long-practised art  
And newly-kindled hope; but they are  
fled— 10  
Gone are they, viewless as the buried  
dead:  
Where now?—Their sword is at the Foe-  
man's heart!  
And thus from year to year his walk they  
thwart,  
And hang like dreams around his guilty  
bed.

## XXXI.

SPANISH GUERRILLAS.

1811.

[Composed 1811.—Published 1815.]

THEY seek, are sought; to daily battle led,  
Shrink not, though far outnumbered by  
their Foes,  
For they have learnt to open and to close  
The ridges of grim war; and at their head  
Are captains such as erst their country  
bred 5  
Or fostered, self-supported chiefs,—like  
those  
Whom hardy Rome was fearful to oppose;  
Whose desperate shock the Carthaginian  
fled.  
In One who lived unknown a shepherd's  
life  
Redoubted Viriathus breathes again; 10  
And Mina<sup>2</sup>, nourished in the studious  
shade,  
With that great Leader vies,—who, sick of  
strife  
And bloodshed, longed in quiet to be laid  
In some green island of the western main,

<sup>2</sup> Don Esprez y Mina, leader of the Guerillas of Navarre, had been educated for the priesthood. The "great Leader" (l. 12) is the Roman general Sertorius, whose romantic story profoundly stirred Wordsworth's imagination (See Prelude I, ll. 190–202). Viriathus (l. 10), the renowned shepherd-leader of the Lusitanians against the arms of Rome.—Ed.

## XXXII.

1811.

[Composed 1811.—Published 1815.]

THE power of Armies is a visible thing,  
 Formal, and circumscribed in time and  
 space ;

But who the limits of that power shall  
 trace

Which a brave People into light can bring  
 Or hide, at will,—for freedom combating  
 By just revenge inflamed? No foot may  
 chase, 6

No eye can follow, to a fatal place  
 That power, that spirit, whether on the  
 wing

Like the strong wind, or sleeping like the  
 wind

Within its awful caves.—From year to year  
 Springs this indigenous produce far and  
 near ; 11

No craft this subtle element can bind,  
 Rising like water from the soil, to find  
 In every nook a lip that it may cheer.

## XXXIII.

1811.

[Composed 1811.—Published 1815.]

HERE pause : the poet claims at least this  
 praise,

That virtuous Liberty hath been the scope  
 Of his pure song, which did not shrink  
 from hope

In the worst moment of these evil days ;  
 From hope, the paramount *duty* that  
 Heaven lays, 5

For its own honour, on man's suffering  
 heart.

Never may from our souls one truth de-  
 part—

That an accursed thing it is to gaze  
 On prosperous tyrants with a dazzled eye ;  
 Nor—touched with due abhorrence of  
 their guilt 10

For whose dire ends tears flow, and blood  
 is spilt,

And justice labours in extremity—  
 Forget thy weakness, upon which is built,  
 O wretched man, the throne of tyranny !

## XXXIV.

## THE FRENCH ARMY IN RUSSIA.

1812-13.

[Composed Feb., 1816.—Published : vol. of 1816.]

HUMANITY, delighting to behold  
 A fond reflection of her own decay,  
 Hath painted Winter like a traveller old,  
 Propped on a staff, and, through the  
 sullen day,

In hooded mantle, limping o'er the plain,  
 As though his weakness were disturbed  
 by pain : 6

Or, if a juster fancy should allow  
 An undisputed symbol of command,  
 The chosen sceptre is a withered bough,  
 Infirmly grasped within a palsied hand.

These emblems suit the helpless and for-  
 lorn, 11

But mighty Winter the device shall scorn.

For he it was—dread Winter ! who beset,  
 Flinging round van and rear his ghastly net,  
 That host, when from the regions of the  
 Pole 15

They shrunk, insane ambition's barren  
 goal—

That host, as huge and strong as e'er defied  
 Their God, and placed their trust in  
 human pride !

As fathers persecute rebellious sons,  
 He smote the blossoms of their warrior  
 youth ; 20

He called on Frost's inexorable tooth  
 Life to consume in Manhood's firmest  
 hold ;

Nor spared the reverend blood that feebly  
 runs ;

For why—unless for liberty enrolled  
 And sacred home—ah ! why should hoary  
 Age be bold ? 25

Fleet the Tartar's reinless steed,  
 But fleet far the pinions of the Wind,  
 Which from Siberian caves the Monarch  
 freed,

And sent him forth, with squadrons of his  
 kind,

And bade the Snow their ample backs  
 bestride, 30

And to the battle ride.

M

No pitying voice commands a halt,  
 No courage can repel the dire assault;  
 Distracted, spiritless, benumbed, and  
     blind,  
 Whole legions sink—and, in one instant,  
     find 35  
 Burial and death: look for them—and  
     descry,  
 When morn returns, beneath the clear  
     blue sky,  
 A soundless waste, a trackless vacancy!

## XXXV.

ON THE SAME OCCASION.

[Composed 1816.—Published 1816.]

YE Storms, resound the praises of your  
     King!  
 And ye mild Seasons—in a sunny clime,  
 Midway on some high hill, while father  
     Time  
 Looks on delighted—meet in festal ring,  
 And loud and long of Winter's triumph  
     sing! 5  
 Sing ye, with blossoms crowned, and  
     fruits, and flowers,  
 Of Winter's breath surcharged with sleety  
     showers,  
 And the dire flapping of his hoary  
     wing!  
 Knit the blithe dance upon the soft green  
     grass;  
 With feet, hands, eyes, looks, lips, report  
     your gain; 10  
 Whisper it to the billows of the main,  
 And to the aerial zephyrs as they pass,  
 That old decrepit Winter—*He* hath  
     slain  
 That Host, which rendered all your boun-  
     ties vain!

## XXXVI.

[Composed November or December, 1822.—  
Published 1827.]

By Moscow self-devoted to a blaze  
 Of dreadful sacrifice; by Russian blood  
 Lavished in fight with desperate hardi-  
     hood;

The unfeeling Elements no claim shall  
     raise  
 To rob our Human-nature of just  
     praise  
 For what she did and suffered. Pledges 5  
     sure  
 Of a deliverance absolute and pure  
 She gave, if Faith might tread the beaten  
     ways  
 Of Providence. But now did the Most  
     High  
 Exalt his still small voice;—to quell that  
     Host 10  
 Gathered his power, a manifest ally;  
 He, whose heaped waves confounded the  
     proud boast  
 Of Pharaoh, said to Famine, Snow, and  
     Frost,  
 "Finish the strife by deadliest victory!"

## XXXVII.

THE GERMANS ON THE HEIGHTS OF  
HOCHHEIM.[Composed 1820.—Published 1822 (*Memorials of  
a Tour, &c.*).

ABRUPTLY paused the strife;—the field  
     throughout  
 Resting upon his arms each warrior stood,  
 Checked in the very act and deed of blood,  
 With breath suspended, like a listening  
     scout.  
 O Silence! thou wert mother of a shout 5  
 That through the texture of yon azure  
     dome  
 Cleaves its glad way, a cry of harvest  
     home  
 Uttered to Heaven in ecstasy devout!  
 The barrier Rhine hath flash'd, through  
     battle-smoke,  
 On men who gaze heart-smitten by the  
     view, 10  
 As if all Germany had felt the shock!  
 —Fly, wretched Gauls! ere they the  
     charge renew  
 Who have seen—themselves now casting  
     off the yoke—  
 The unconquerable Stream his course  
     pursue.

## XXXVIII.

NOVEMBER, 1813.

[Composed November, 1813.—Published 1815.]

Now that all hearts are glad, all faces  
bright,

Our aged Sovereign sits, to the ebb and  
flow

Of states and kingdoms, to their joy or  
woe,

Insensible. He sits deprived of sight,  
And lamentably wrapped in twofold night,  
Whom no weak hopes deceived; whose  
mind ensued, 6

Through perilous war, with regal fortitude,  
Peace that should claim respect from law-  
less Might.

Dread King of Kings, vouchsafe a ray  
divine

To his forlorn condition! let thy grace  
Upon his inner soul in mercy shine;  
Permit his heart to kindle, and to embrace  
(Though it were only for a moment's  
space)

The triumphs of this hour<sup>1</sup>; for they are  
THINE!

## XXXIX.

## ODE.

1814.

[Composed Jan., 1816.—Published: vol. of 1816.]

Carmina possumus

Donare, et pretium dicere muneris.

Non incisa notis marmora publicis,

Per quae spiritus et vita reddit bonis

Post mortem ducibus

———clarius indicant

Laudes, quam ———Pierides; neque,

Si chartae signant quod bene feceris,

Mercedem tuleris.—HOR. Car. 5. Lib. 4. 11 sq.

I.

WHEN the soft hand of sleep had closed  
the latch

On the tired household of corporeal sense,  
And Fancy, keeping unreluctant watch,  
Was free her choicest favours to dispense;

<sup>1</sup> i.e. the final overthrow of Napoleon at Leipzig, Oct. 16-19, 1813.—En.

I saw, in wondrous perspective displayed,  
A landscape more august than happiest  
skill 6

Of pencil ever clothed with light and  
shade;

An intermingled pomp of vale and hill,  
City, and naval stream, suburban grove,  
And stately forest where the wild deer  
rove; 10

Nor wanted lurking hamlet, dusky towns,  
And scattered rural farms of aspect  
bright;

And, here and there, between the pas-  
toral downs,

The azure sea upswelled upon the sight.  
Fair prospect, such as Britain only  
shows! 15

But not a living creature could be seen  
Through its wide circuit, that, in deep  
repose,

And, even to sadness, lonely and serene,  
Lay hushed; till—through a portal in  
the sky

Brighter than brightest loop-hole, in a  
storm, 20

Opening before the sun's triumphant  
eye—

Issued, to sudden view, a glorious Form!  
Earthward it glided with a swift descent:  
Saint George himself this Visitant must  
be;

And, ere a thought could ask on what  
intent 25

He sought the regions of humanity,  
A thrilling voice was heard, that vivified  
City and field and flood;—aloud it cried—

“Though from my celestial home,

Like a Champion, armed I come; 30

On my helm the dragon crest,

And the red cross on my breast;

I, the Guardian of this Land,

Speak not now of toilsome duty;

Well obeyed was that command— 35

Whence bright days of festive beauty;

Haste, Virgins, haste!—the flowers which  
summer gave

Have perished in the field;

But the green thickets plenteously shall  
yield

Fit garlands for the brave, 40

That will be welcome, if by you entwined;  
 Haste, Virgins, haste; and you, ye Ma-  
     trons grave,  
 Go forth with rival youthfulness of mind,  
     And gather what ye find  
 Of hardy laurel and wild holly boughs—  
 To deck your stern Defenders' modest  
     brows! 46  
     Such simple gifts prepare,  
 Though they have gained a worthier meed,  
     And in due time shall share  
 Those palms and amaranthine wreaths  
 Unto their martyred Countrymen de-  
     creed, 51  
 In realms where everlasting freshness  
     breathes!"

## II.

And lo! with crimson banners proudly  
     streaming,  
 And upright weapons innocently gleaming,  
 Along the surface of a spacious plain 55  
 Advance in order the redoubted Bands,  
 And there receive green chaplets from  
     the hands  
     Of a fair female train—  
     Maids and Matrons, dight  
     In robes of dazzling white; 60  
 While from the crowd bursts forth a  
     rapturous noise  
     By the cloud-capt hills retorted;  
     And a throng of rosy boys  
     In loose fashion tell their joys;  
 And grey-haired sires, on staffs sup-  
     ported, 65  
 Look round, and by their smiling seem  
     to say,  
 "Thus strives a grateful Country to  
     display  
 The mighty debt which nothing can  
     repay!"

## III.

Anon before my sight a palace rose 69  
 Built of all precious substances,—so pure  
 And exquisite, that sleep alone bestows  
 Ability like splendour to endure:  
 Entered, with streaming thousands,  
     through the gate,  
 I saw the banquet spread beneath a Dome  
     of state,

A lofty Dome, that dared to emulate 75  
 The heaven of sable night  
 With starry lustre; yet had power to  
     throw  
 Solemn effulgence, clear as solar light,  
 Upon a princely company below,  
 While the vault rang with choral har-  
     mony, 80  
 Like some Nymph-haunted grot beneath  
     the roaring sea.  
 —No sooner ceased that peal, than on the  
     verge  
 Of exultation hung a dirge  
 Breathed from a soft and lonely instru-  
     ment,  
     That kindled recollections 85  
     Of agonised affections;  
 And, though some tears the strain at-  
     tended,  
     The mournful passion ended  
 In peace of spirit, and sublime content!

## IV.

But garlands wither; festal shows de-  
     part, 90  
 Like dreams themselves; and sweetest  
     sound—  
     (Albeit of effect profound)  
     It was—and it is gone!  
 Victorious England! bid the silent Art  
 Reflect, in glowing hues that shall not  
     fade, 95  
 Those high achievements; even as she  
     arrayed  
 With second life the deed of Marathon  
     Upon Athenian walls;  
 So may she labour for thy civic halls:  
     And be the guardian spaces 100  
     Of consecrated places,  
 As nobly graced by Sculpture's patient  
     toil;  
 And let imperishable Columns rise  
 Fixed in the depths of this courageous  
     soil;  
 Expressive signals of a glorious strife, 105  
 And competent to shed a spark divine  
 Into the torpid breast of daily life;—  
 Records on which, for pleasure of all  
     eyes,  
     The morning sun may shine  
 With gratulation thoroughly benign! 110

v.

And ye, Pierian Sisters, sprung from  
Jove  
And sage Mnemosyne,—full long de-  
barred  
From your first mansions, exiled all too  
long  
From many a hallowed stream and grove,  
Dear native regions where ye wont to  
rove,  
115  
Chanting for patriot heroes the reward  
Of never-dying song!  
Now (for, though Truth descending from  
above  
The Olympian summit hath destroyed for  
age  
119  
Your kindred Deities, Ye live and move,  
Spared for obeisance from perpetual love,  
For privilege redeemed of godlike sway)  
Now, on the margin of some spotless  
fountain,  
Or top serene of unmolested mountain,  
Strike audibly the noblest of your lyres,  
And for a moment meet the soul's de-  
sires!  
126  
That I, or some more favoured Bard, may  
hear  
What ye, celestial Maids! have often  
sung  
Of Britain's acts,—may catch it with rapt  
ear,  
And give the treasure to our British  
tongue!  
130  
So shall the characters of that proud page  
Support their mighty theme from age  
to age;  
And, in the desert places of the earth,  
When they to future empires have given  
birth,  
So shall the people gather and believe 135  
The bold report, transferred to every  
clime;  
And the whole world, not envious but  
admiring,  
And to the like aspiring,  
Own—that the progeny of this fair Isle  
Had power as lofty actions to achieve 140  
As were performed in man's heroic prime;  
Nor wanted, when their fortitude had held  
Its even tenor, and the foe was quelled,

A corresponding virtue to beguile  
The hostile purpose of wide-wasting  
Time—  
145  
That not in vain they laboured to secure,  
For their great deeds, perpetual memory,  
And fame as largely spread as land and  
sea,  
By Works of spirit high and passion pure!

XL.

FEELINGS OF A FRENCH ROYALIST, ON THE  
DISINTERMENT OF THE REMAINS OF THE  
DUKE D'ENGHIEN.

[Composed 1816.—Published: vol. of 1816.]

DEAR Reliques! from a pit of vilest  
mould  
Uprisen—to lodge among ancestral kings;  
And to inflict shame's salutary stings  
On the remorseless hearts of men grown  
old  
In a blind worship; men perversely bold  
Even to this hour,—yet, some shall now  
forsake  
6  
Their monstrous Idol if the dead e'er  
spake,  
To warn the living; if truth were ever  
told  
By aught redeemed out of the hollow  
grave:  
O murdered Prince! meek, loyal, pious,  
brave!  
10  
The power of retribution once was given:  
But 'tis a rueful thought that willow  
bands  
So often tie the thunder-wielding hands  
Of Justice sent to earth from highest  
Heaven!

XLI.

OCCASIONED BY THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO.

(The last six lines intended for an Inscription.)

FEBRUARY, 1816.

[Composed 1816.—Published Feb. 4, 1816 (*The  
Champion*); vol. of 1816.]

INTREPID sons of Albion! not by you  
Is life despised; ah no, the spacious earth  
Ne'er saw a race who held, by right of  
birth,

So many objects to which love is due:  
Ye slight not life—to God and Nature  
true; 5

But death, becoming death, is dearer far,  
When duty bids you bleed in open war:  
Hence hath your prowess quelled that  
impious crew.

Heroes!—for instant sacrifice prepared;  
Yet filled with ardour and on triumph  
bent 10

'Mid direst shocks of mortal accident—  
To you who fell, and you whom slaughter  
spared

To guard the fallen, and consummate the  
event,  
Your Country rears this sacred Monu-  
ment!

### XLII.

SEIGE OF VIENNA RAISED BY JOHN  
SOBIESKI.

FEBRUARY, 1816.

[Composed Jan., 1816.—Published Feb. 4, 1816  
(*The Champion*); vol. of 1816.]

OH, for a kindling touch from that pure  
flame

Which ministered, erewhile, to a sacrifice  
Of gratitude, beneath Italian skies,  
In words like these: "Up, Voice of song!  
proclaim

Thy saintly rapture with celestial aim: 5  
For lo! the Imperial City stands released  
From bondage threatened by the em-  
battled East,

And Christendom respires; from guilt  
and shame

Redeemed, from miserable fear set free  
By one day's feat, one mighty victory. 10  
—Chant the Deliverer's praise in every  
tongue!

The Cross shall spread, the Crescent hath  
waxed dim;

He conquering, as in joyful Heaven is  
sung,

HE CONQUERING THROUGH GOD, AND GOD  
BY HIM<sup>1</sup>."

<sup>1</sup> See Filicain's Ode.

### XLIII.

OCCASIONED BY THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO,  
FEBRUARY, 1816.

[Composed February, 1816.—Published: vol.  
of 1816.]

THE Bard—whose soul is meek as dawn-  
ing day,

Yet trained to judgments righteously  
severe,

Fervid, yet conversant with holy fear,  
As recognising one Almighty sway:

He—whose experienced eye can pierce the  
array 5

Of past events; to whom, in vision clear,  
The aspiring heads of future things  
appear,

Like mountain-tops whose mists have  
rolled away—

Assailed from all encumbrance of our  
time<sup>2</sup>,

He only, if such breathe, in strains  
devout 10

Shall comprehend this victory sublime;  
Shall worthily rehearse the hideous rout,  
The triumph hail, which from their peace-  
ful clime

Angels might welcome with a choral  
shout!

### XLIV.

[Composed ? (perhaps 1816).—Published 1827.]

EMPERORS and Kings, how oft have  
temples rung

With impious thanksgiving, the Al-  
mighty's scorn!

How oft above their altars have been  
hung

Trophies that led the good and wise to  
mourn 4

Triumphant wrong, battle of battle born,  
And sorrow that to fruitless sorrow clung!

Now, from Heaven-sanctioned victory,  
Peace is sprung;

In this firm hour Salvation lifts her horn.  
Glory to arms! But, conscious that the  
nerve

<sup>2</sup> "From all this world's encumbrance did him-  
self assail."—SPENSER.

Of popular reason, long mistrusted, freed  
Your thrones, ye Powers, from duty fear  
to swerve ! 11

Be just, be grateful ; nor, the oppressor's  
creed

Reviving, heavier chastisement deserve  
Than ever forced unpitied hearts to bleed.

## XLV.

## ODE.

1815.

[Composed 1816.—Published : volume of 1816.]

## I.

IMAGINATION—ne'er before content,  
But aye ascending, restless in her pride  
From all that martial feats could yield  
To her desires, or to her hopes present—  
Stooped to the Victory on that Belgic  
field 5

Achieved, this closing deed magnificent,  
And with the embrace was satisfied.

—Fly, ministers of Fame,  
With every help that ye from earth and  
heaven may claim !

Bear through the world these tidings of  
delight ! 10

—Hours, Days, and Months, have borne  
them in the sight

Of mortals, hurrying like a sudden shower  
That landward stretches from the sea,  
The morning's splendours to devour ;  
But this swift travel scorns the company  
Of irksome change, or threats from sad-  
dening power. 16

—The shock is given—the *Adversaries*  
bleed—

*Lo, Justice triumphs ! Earth is freed !*  
Joyful annunciation !—it went forth—  
It pierced the caverns of the sluggish  
North— 20

It found no barrier on the ridge  
Of Andes—frozen gulfs became its  
bridge—

The vast Pacific gladdens with the  
freight—

Upon the Lakes of Asia 'tis bestowed—  
The Arabian desert shapes a willing  
road 25

Across her burning breast,

For this refreshing incense from the  
West !—

—Where snakes and lions breed,  
Where towns and cities thick as stars  
appear,

Wherever fruits are gathered, and  
where'er 30

The upturned soil receives the hopeful  
seed—

While the Sun rules, and cross the shades  
of night—

The unwearied arrow hath pursued its  
flight !

The eyes of good men thankfully give  
heed,

And in its sparkling progress read 35  
Of virtue crowned with glory's deathless  
meed :

Tyrants exult to hear of kingdoms won,  
And slaves are pleased to learn that  
mighty feats are done ;

Even the proud Realm, from whose dis-  
tracted borders

This messenger of good was launched  
in air, 40

France, humbled France, amid her wild  
disorders,

Feels, and hereafter shall the truth  
declare,

That she too lacks not reason to rejoice,  
And utter England's name with sadly-  
plausive voice.

## II.

O genuine glory, pure renown ! 45  
And well might it beseech that mighty  
Town

Into whose bosom earth's best treasures  
flow,

To whom all persecuted men retreat ;  
If a new Temple lift her votive brow  
High on the shore of silver Thames—to  
greet 50

The peaceful guest advancing from afar.  
Bright be the Fabric, as a star  
Fresh risen, and beautiful within !—there  
meet

Dependence infinite, proportion just ;  
A Pile that Grace approves, and Time  
can trust 55

With his most sacred wealth, heroic dust.

## III.

But if the valiant of this land  
 In reverential modesty demand,  
 That all observance, due to them, be paid  
 Where their serene progenitors are laid ;  
 Kings, warriors, high-souled poets, saint-  
     like sages, 61  
 England's illustrious sons of long, long  
     ages ;  
 Be it not unordained that solemn rites,  
 Within the circuit of those Gothic walls,  
 Shall be performed at pregnant intervals ;  
 Commemoration holy that unites 66  
 The living generations with the dead ;  
     By the deep soul-moving sense  
     Of religious eloquence,—  
     By visual pomp, and by the tie 70  
     Of sweet and threatening harmony ;  
     Soft notes, awful as the omen  
     Of destructive tempests coming,  
     And escaping from that sadness  
     Into elevated gladness ; 75  
     While the white-robed choir attendant,  
     Under mouldering banners pendant,  
 Provoke all potent symphonies to raise  
     Songs of victory and praise,  
 For them who bravely stood unhurt, or  
     bled 80  
 With medicable wounds, or found their  
     graves  
 Upon the battle field, or under ocean's  
     waves ;  
 Or were conducted home in single state,  
 And long procession—there to lie,  
 Where their sons' sons, and all posterity,  
 Unheard by them, their deeds shall  
     celebrate ! 86

## IV.

Nor will the God of peace and love  
 Such martial service disapprove.  
 He guides the Pestilence—the cloud  
 Of locusts travels on his breath ; 90  
 The region that in hope was ploughed  
 His drought consumes, his mildew taints  
     with death ;  
 He springs the hushed Volcano's mine,  
 He puts the Earthquake on her still  
     design,

Darkens the sun, hath bade the forest sink,  
 And, drinking towns and cities, still can  
     drink 96  
 Cities and towns—'tis Thou—the work is  
     Thine !—  
 The fierce Tornado sleeps within Thy  
     courts—  
     He hears the word—he flies—  
     And navies perish in their ports ; 100  
 For Thou art angry with Thine enemies !  
     For these, and mourning for our  
     errors,  
     And sins, that point their terrors,  
 We bow our heads before Thee, and we  
     laud  
 And magnify Thy name, Almighty God !  
     But Man is Thy most awful instru-  
     ment, 106  
     In working out a pure intent<sup>1</sup> ;  
 Thou cloth'st the wicked in their dazzling  
     mail,  
 And for Thy righteous purpose they  
     prevail ;  
     Thine arm from peril guards the  
     coasts 110  
     Of them who in Thy laws delight :  
 Thy presence turns the scale of doubtful  
     fight,  
 Tremendous God of battles, Lord of  
     Hosts !

## V.

Forbear :—to Thee—  
 Father and Judge of all, with fervent  
     tongue, 115  
     But in a gentler strain  
 Of contemplation, by no sense of wrong  
 (Too quick and keen) incited to disdain  
 Of pity pleading from the heart in vain—  
     To THEE—To THEE, 120  
 Just God of christianised Humanity,  
 Shall praises be poured forth, and thanks  
     ascend,  
 That Thou hast brought our warfare to  
     an end,

<sup>1</sup> Lines 106, 107 were, in 1845, substituted for the four following lines at which many had stumbled :—

“But Thy most dreaded instrument,  
 In working out a pure intent,  
 Is Man—arrayed for mutual slaughter,  
 —Yea, Carnage is thy daughter !”—ED.

And that we need no second victory !  
 Blest, above measure blest, 125  
 If on Thy love our Land her hopes shall  
 rest,  
 And all the Nations labour to fulfil  
 Thy law, and live henceforth in peace, in  
 pure good will.

XLVI.

ODE.

THE MORNING OF THE DAY APPOINTED FOR  
 A GENERAL THANKSGIVING. JANUARY 18,  
 1816.

Composed January, 1816.—Published: vol. of 1816]

I.

HAIL, orient Conqueror of gloomy Night !  
 Thou that canst shed the bliss of gratitude  
 On hearts howe'er insensible or rude ;  
 Whether thy punctual visitations smite  
 The haughty towers where monarchs  
 dwell ; 5  
 Or thou, impartial Sun, with presence  
 bright  
 Cheer'st the low threshold of the pea-  
 sant's cell !  
 Not unrejoiced I see thee climb the sky  
 In naked splendour, clear from mist or  
 haze,  
 Or cloud approaching to divert the rays,  
 Which even in deepest winter testify 11  
 Thy power and majesty,  
 Dazzling the vision that presumes to gaze.  
 —Well does thine aspect usher in this  
 Day ;  
 As aptly suits therewith that modest pace  
 Submitted to the chains 16  
 That bind thee to the path which God  
 ordains  
 That thou shalt trace,  
 Till, with the heavens and earth, thou  
 pass away !  
 Nor less, the stillness of these frosty  
 plains, 20  
 Their utter stillness, and the silent grace  
 Of yon ethereal summits white with snow,  
 (Whose tranquil pomp and spotless purity  
 Report of storms gone by  
 To us who tread below), 25  
 Do with the service of this Day accord.  
 —Divinest Object which the uplifted eye

Of mortal man is suffered to behold ;  
 Thou, who upon those snow-clad Heights  
 hast poured  
 Meek lustre, nor forget'st the humble Vale ;  
 Thou who dost warm Earth's universal  
 mould, 31  
 And for thy bounty wert not unadored  
 By pious men of old ;  
 Once more, heart-cheering Sun, I bid thee  
 hail !  
 Bright be thy course to-day, let not this  
 promise fail ! 35

II.

'Mid the deep quiet of this morning  
 hour,  
 All nature seems to hear me while I speak,  
 By feelings urged that do not vainly seek  
 Apt language, ready as the tuneful notes  
 That stream in blithe succession from the  
 throats 40  
 Of birds, in leafy bower,  
 Warbling a farewell to a vernal shower.  
 —There is a radiant though a short-lived  
 flame,  
 That burns for Poets in the dawning east ;  
 And oft my soul hath kindled at the same,  
 When the captivity of sleep had ceased ; 46  
 But He who fixed immoveably the frame  
 Of the round world, and built, by laws as  
 strong,  
 A solid refuge for distress—  
 The towers of righteousness ; 50  
 He knows that from a holier altar came  
 The quickening spark of this day's sacri-  
 fice ;  
 Knows that the source is nobler whence  
 doth rise  
 The current of this matin song ;  
 That deeper far it lies 55  
 Than aught dependent on the fickle skies.

III.

Have we not conquered?—by the venge-  
 ful sword ?  
 Ah no, by dint of Magnanimity ;  
 That curbed the baser passions, and left  
 free  
 A loyal band to follow their liege Lord  
 Clear-sighted Honour, and his staid Com-  
 peers, 61  
 Along a track of most unnatural years ;

In execution of heroic deeds  
 Whose memory, spotless as the crystal  
     beads  
 Of morning dew upon the untrodden  
     meads, 65  
 Shall live enrolled above the starry  
     spheres.  
 He, who in concert with an earthly string  
 Of Britain's acts would sing,  
 He with enraptured voice will tell  
 Of One whose spirit no reverse could  
     quell; 70  
 Of One that 'mid the failing never failed—  
 Who paints how Britain struggled and  
     prevailed  
 Shall represent her labouring with an eye  
     Of circumspect humanity;  
 Shall show her clothed with strength and  
     skill 75  
     All martial duties to fulfil;  
 Firm as a rock in stationary fight;  
 In motion rapid as the lightning's gleam;  
 Fierce as a flood-gate bursting at mid-  
     night  
 To rouse the wicked from their giddy  
     dream— 80  
 Woe, woe to all that face her in the  
     field!  
 Appalled she may not be, and cannot  
     yield.

## IV.

And thus is *missed* the sole true glory  
 That can belong to human story!  
 At which they only shall arrive 85  
 Who through the abyss of weakness  
     dive.  
 The very humblest are too proud of heart;  
 And one brief day is rightly set apart  
 For Him who lifteth up and layeth low;  
 For that Almighty God to whom we owe,  
 Say not that we have vanquished—but  
     that we survive. 91

## V.

How dreadful the dominion of the impure!  
 Why should the Song be tardy to proclaim  
 That less than power unbounded could  
     not tame

That soul of Evil—which, from Hell let  
     loose, 95  
 Had filled the astonished world with such  
     abuse  
 As boundless patience only could endure?  
 —Wide-wasted regions—cities wrapt in  
     flame—  
 Who sees, may lift a streaming eye  
 To Heaven;—who never saw, may heave  
     a sigh; 100  
 But the foundation of our nature shakes,  
 And with an infinite pain the spirit aches,  
 When desolated countries, towns on fire,  
     Are but the avowed attire  
 Of warfare waged with desperate mind 105  
 Against the life of virtue in mankind;  
     Assaulting without ruth  
     The citadels of truth;  
 While the fair gardens of civility,  
     By ignorance defaced, 110  
     By violence laid waste,  
 Perish without reprieve for flower or tree!

## VI.

A crouching purpose—a distracted will—  
 Opposed to hopes that battered upon  
     scorn,  
 And to desires whose ever-waxing horn  
 Not all the light of earthly power could  
     fill; 116  
 Opposed to dark, deep plots of patient  
     skill,  
 And to celerities of lawless force;  
 Which, spurning God, had flung away  
     remorse—  
 What could they gain but shadows of re-  
     dress? 120  
 —So bad proceeded propagating worse;  
 And discipline was passion's dire excess.  
 Widens the fatal web, its lines extend,  
 And deadlier poisons in the chalice blend.  
 When will your trials teach you to be  
     wise? 125  
 —O prostrate Lands, consult your agonies!

## VII.

No more—the guilt is banished,  
 And, with the guilt, the shame is fled;  
 And, with the guilt and shame, the Woe  
     hath vanished,

Shaking the dust and ashes from her  
head! 130  
—No more—these lingerings of distress  
Sully the limpid stream of thankfulness.  
What robe can Gratitude employ  
So seemly as the radiant vest of Joy?  
What steps so suitable as those that move  
In prompt obedience to spontaneous  
measures 136  
Of glory, and felicity, and love,  
Surrendering the whole heart to sacred  
pleasures?

## VIII.

O Britain! dearer far than life is dear,  
If one there be 140  
Of all thy progeny  
Who can forget thy prowess, never more  
Be that ungrateful Son allowed to hear  
Thy green leaves rustle or thy torrents  
roar.  
As springs the lion from his den, 145  
As from a forest-brake  
Upstarts a glistening snake,  
The bold Arch-despot re-appeared;—  
again  
Wide Europe heaves, impatient to be cast,  
With all her armed Powers, 150  
On that offensive soil, like waves upon  
a thousand shores.  
The trumpet blew a universal blast!  
But Thou art foremost in the field:—  
there stand:  
Receive the triumph destined to thy hand!  
All States have glorified themselves;—  
their claims 155  
Are weighed by Providence, in balance  
even;  
And now, in preference to the mightiest  
nations,  
To Thee the exterminating sword is given.  
Dread mark of approbation, justly gained!  
Exalted office, worthily sustained! 160

## IX.

Preserve, O Lord! within our hearts  
The memory of Thy favour,  
That else insensibly departs,  
And loses its sweet savour!

Lodge it within us!—as the power of  
light 165  
Lives inexhaustibly in precious gems,  
Fixed on the front of Eastern diadems,  
So shine our thankfulness for ever bright!  
What offering, what transcendent monu-  
ment  
Shall our sincerity to Thee present? 170  
—Not work of hands; but trophies that  
may reach  
To highest Heaven—the labour of the  
Soul;  
That builds, as thy unerring precepts  
teach,  
Upon the internal conquests made by  
each,  
Her hope of lasting glory for the whole.  
Yet will not heaven disown nor earth  
gainsay 176  
The outward service of this day;  
Whether the worshippers entreat  
Forgiveness from God's mercy-seat;  
Or thanks and praises to His throne  
ascend 180  
That He has brought our warfare to an  
end,  
And that we need no second victory!—  
Ha! what a ghastly sight for man to see;  
And to the heavenly saints in peace who  
dwell,  
For a brief moment, terrible; 185  
But, to Thy sovereign penetration, fair,  
Before whom all things are, that were,  
All judgments that have been, or e'er  
shall be;  
Links in the chain of Thy tranquillity!  
Along the bosom of this favoured Nation,  
Breathe Thou, this day, a vital undula-  
tion! 191  
Let all who do this land inherit  
Be conscious of Thy moving spirit!  
Oh, 'tis a goodly Ordinance,—the sight,  
Though sprung from bleeding war, is one  
of pure delight; 195  
Bless Thou the hour, or ere the hour  
arrive,  
When a whole people shall kneel down in  
prayer,  
And, at one moment, in one rapture, strive  
With lip and heart to tell their gratitude  
For Thy protecting care, 200

Their solemn joy—praising the Eternal  
 Lord  
 For tyranny subdued,  
 And for the sway of equity renewed,  
 For liberty confirmed, and peace restored!

## x.

But hark—the summons!—down the  
 placid lake 205  
 Floats the soft cadence of the church-  
 tower bells;

Bright shines the Sun, as if his beams  
 would wake

The tender insects sleeping in their cells;  
 Bright shines the Sun—and not a breeze  
 to shake

The drops that tip the melting icicles. 210  
*O, enter now his Temple gate!*

Inviting words—perchance already flung  
 (As the crowd press devoutly down the  
 aisle

Of some old Minster's venerable pile)  
 From voices into zealous passion stung,  
 While the tubed engine feels the inspiring  
 blast, 216

And has begun—its clouds of sound to  
 cast

Forth towards empyreal Heaven,  
 As if the fretted roof were riven.  
 Us humbler ceremonies now await; 220

But in the bosom, with devout respect  
 The banner of our joy we will erect,  
 And strength of love our souls shall  
 elevate:

For to a few collected in His name, 224  
 Their heavenly Father will incline an ear  
 Gracious to service hallowed by its aim;—  
 Awake! the majesty of God revere!

Go—and with foreheads meekly bowed  
 Present your prayers—go—and rejoice  
 aloud—

The Holy One will hear! 230  
 And what, 'mid silence deep, with faith  
 sincere,

Ye, in your low and undisturbed estate,  
 Shall simply feel and purely meditate—  
 Of warnings—from the unprecedented  
 might,

Which, in our time, the impious have  
 disclosed; 235

And of more arduous duties thence imposed  
 Upon the future advocates of right;

Of mysteries revealed,  
 And judgments unrepealed,  
 Of earthly revolution, 240  
 And final retribution,—

To his omniscience will appear  
 An offering not unworthy to find place,  
 On this high DAY of THANKS, before the  
 Throne of Grace!

# MEMORIALS OF A TOUR ON THE CONTINENT<sup>1</sup>.

1820.

## DEDICATION.

(SENT WITH THESE POEMS, IN MS., TO —.)

DEAR Fellow-travellers! think not that the Muse,  
To You presenting these memorial Lays,  
Can hope the general eye thereon would gaze,  
As on a mirror that gives back the hues  
Of living Nature; no—though free to choose  
The greenest bowers, the most inviting ways,  
The fairest landscapes and the brightest days—  
Her skill she tried with less ambitious views.  
For You she wrought: Ye only can supply  
The life, the truth, the beauty: she confides  
In that enjoyment which with You abides,  
Trusts to your love and vivid memory;  
Thus far contented, that for You her verse  
Shall lack not power the "meeting soul to pierce!"

W. WORDSWORTH

RYDAL MOUNT, Nov., 1821.

### I.

FISH-WOMEN.—ON LANDING AT CALAIS.

'Tis said, fantastic ocean doth unfold  
The likeness of what'er on land is seen;  
But if the Nereid Sisters and their Queen,  
Above whose heads the tide so long hath  
    rolled,  
The Dames resemble whom we here behold,  
How fearful were it down through open-  
    ing waves

To sink, and meet them in their fretted  
    caves,  
Withered, grotesque, immeasurably old,  
And shrill and fierce in accent!—Fear it  
    not:  
For they Earth's fairest daughters do  
    excel;  
Pure undecaying beauty is their lot;  
Their voices into liquid music swell,  
Thrilling each pearly cleft and sparry  
    grot,  
The undisturbed abodes where Sea-  
    nymphs dwell!

### II.

BRUGÈS.

BRUGÈS I saw attired with golden light  
(Streamed from the west) as with a robe  
    of power:  
The splendour fled; and now the sunless  
    hour,  
That, slowly making way for peaceful  
    night,  
Best suits with fallen grandeur, to my  
    sight  
Offers the beauty, the magnificence,  
And sober graces, left her for defence  
Against the injuries of time, the spite  
Of fortune, and the desolating storms

<sup>1</sup> These *Memorials* were published as a separate volume early in 1822. The poems were mostly written between January and November, 1821, the latest written of all, the *Dedication*, being dated November. To save needless repetition, none of the following poems will be furnished with the usual chronological note, except those to which the preceding observation does not apply. Where the usual note is wanting, the following general note may be taken as appropriate:—Composed 1821.—Published 1822.—Exceptions will be duly noted.—Ed.

Of future war. Advance not—spare to  
hide,<sup>10</sup>  
O gentle Power of darkness! these mild  
hues;  
Obscure not yet these silent avenues  
Of stateliest architecture, where the Forms  
Of nun-like females, with soft motion,  
glide!

## III.

## BRUGÈS.

THE Spirit of Antiquity—enshrined  
Insumptuous buildings, vocal in sweet song,  
In picture, speaking with heroic tongue,  
And with devout solemnities entwined—  
Mounts to the seat of grace within the  
mind:<sup>5</sup>  
Hence Forms that glide with swan-like  
ease along,  
Hence motions, even amid the vulgar  
throng,  
To an harmonious decency confined:  
As if the streets were consecrated ground,  
The city one vast temple, dedicate<sup>10</sup>  
To mutual respect in thought and deed;  
To leisure, to forbearances sedate;  
To social cares from jarring passions freed;  
A deeper peace than that in deserts found!

## IV.

## INCIDENT AT BRUGÈS.

[Composed after July, 1828.—Published: vol.  
of 1835.]

IN Brugès town is many a street  
Whence busy life hath fled;  
Where, without hurry, noiseless feet  
The grass-grown pavement tread.  
There heard we, halting in the shade<sup>5</sup>  
Flung from a Convent-tower,  
A harp that tuneful prelude made  
To a voice of thrilling power.  
The measure, simple truth to tell,  
Was fit for some gay throng;<sup>10</sup>  
Though from the same grim turret fell  
The shadow and the song.  
When silent were both voice and chords,  
The strain seemed doubly dear,  
Yet sad as sweet,—for *English* words<sup>15</sup>  
Had fallen upon the ear.

It was a breezy hour of eve;  
And pinnacle and spire  
Quivered and seemed almost to heave,  
Clothed with innocuous fire;<sup>20</sup>  
But, where we stood, the setting sun  
Showed little of his state;  
And, if the glory reached the Nun,  
'Twas through an iron grate.

Not always is the heart unwise,<sup>25</sup>  
Nor pity idly born,  
If even a passing Stranger sighs  
For them who do not mourn.  
Sad is thy doom, self-solaced dove,  
Captive, whoe'er thou be!<sup>30</sup>  
Oh! what is beauty, what is love,  
And opening life to thee?

Such feeling pressed upon my soul,  
A feeling sanctified  
By one soft trickling tear that stole<sup>35</sup>  
From the Maiden at my side;  
Less tribute could she pay than this.  
Borne gaily o'er the sea,  
Fresh from the beauty and the bliss<sup>40</sup>  
Of English liberty?

## V.

## AFTER VISITING THE FIELD OF WATERLOO.

A WINGED Goddess—clothed in vesture  
wrought  
Of rainbow colours; One whose port was  
bold,  
Whose overburthened hand could scarcely  
hold  
The glittering crowns and garlands which  
it brought—  
Hovered in air above the far-famed Spot.  
She vanished; leaving prospect blank and  
cold.<sup>6</sup>  
Of wind-swept corn that wide around us  
rolled  
In dreary billows, wood, and meagre cot,  
And monuments that soon must disap-  
pear:  
Yet a dread local recompense we found;  
While glory seemed betrayed, while  
patriot-zeal<sup>11</sup>  
Sank in our hearts, we felt as men *should*  
feel

With such vast hoards of hidden carnage  
near,  
And horror breathing from the silent  
ground !

VI.

BETWEEN NAMUR AND LIEGE.

WHAT lovelier home could gentle Fancy  
choose?  
Is this the stream, whose cities, heights,  
and plains,  
War's favourite playground, are with  
crimson stains  
Familiar, as the Morn with pearly dew?  
The Morn, that now, along the silver  
MEUSE, 5  
Spreading her peaceful ensigns, calls the  
swains  
To tend their silent boats and ringing  
wains,  
Or strip the bough whose mellow fruit  
bestrews  
The ripening corn beneath it. As mine  
eyes  
Turn from the fortified and threatening  
hill, 10  
How sweet the prospect of yon watery  
glade,  
With its grey rocks clustering in pensive  
shade—  
That, shaped like old monastic turrets,  
rise  
From the smooth meadow-ground, serene  
and still !

VII.

AIX-LA-CHAPELLE.

WAS it to disenchant, and to undo,  
That we approached the Seat of Charle-  
maine?  
To sweep from many an old romantic  
strain  
That faith which no devotion may renew !  
Why does this puny Church present to  
view 5  
Her feeble columns? and that scanty  
chair!  
This sword that one of our weak times  
might wear !  
Objects of false pretence, or meanly true !

If from a traveller's fortune I might claim  
A palpable memorial of that day, 10  
Then would I seek the Pyrenean Breach  
That ROLAND clove with huge two-handed  
sway,  
And to the enormous labour left his name,  
Where unremitting frosts the rocky cres-  
cent bleach.

VIII.

IN THE CATHEDRAL AT COLOGNE.

O FOR the help of Angels to complete  
This Temple—Angels governed by a plan  
Thus far pursued (how gloriously !) by  
Man,  
Studios that *He* might not disdain the seat  
Who dwells in heaven ! But that aspir-  
ing heat 5  
Hath failed ; and now, ye Powers ! whose  
gorgeous wings  
And splendid aspect yon emblazonings  
But faintly picture, 'twere an office meet  
For you, on these unfinished shafts to try  
The midnight virtues of your harmony :—  
This vast design might tempt you to  
repeat 11  
Strains that call forth upon empyreal  
ground  
Immortal Fabrics, rising to the sound  
Of penetrating harps and voices sweet !

IX.

IN A CARRIAGE, UPON THE BANKS OF THE  
RHINE.

AMID this dance of objects sadness steals  
O'er the defrauded heart—while sweep-  
ing by,  
As in a fit of Thespian jollity,  
Beneath her vine-leaf crown the green  
Earth reels :  
Backward, in rapid evanescence, wheels 5  
The venerable pageantry of Time,  
Each beetling rampart, and each tower  
sublime,  
And what the Dell unwillingly reveals  
Of lurking cloistral arch, through trees  
espied  
Near the bright River's edge. Yet why  
repine ? 10  
To muse, to creep, to halt at will, to gaze—

Such sweet wayfaring—of life's spring  
the pride,  
Her summer's faithful joy—that still is  
mine,  
And in fit measure cheers autumnal days.

## X.

## HYMN,

FOR THE BOATMEN, AS THEY APPROACH  
THE RAPIDS UNDER THE CASTLE OF  
HEIDELBERG.

JESU ! bless our slender Boat,  
By the current swept along ;  
Loud its threatenings—let them not  
Drown the music of a song  
Breathed thy mercy to implore,  
Where these troubled waters roar !

Saviour, for our warning, seen  
Bleeding on that precious Rood ;  
If, while through the meadows green  
Gently wound the peaceful flood,  
We forgot Thee, do not Thou  
Disregard Thy Suppliants now !

Hither, like yon ancient Tower  
Watching o'er the River's bed,  
Fling the shadow of thy power,  
Else we sleep among the dead ;  
Thou who trod'st the billowy sea,  
Shield us in our jeopardy !

Guide our Bark among the waves ;  
Through the rocks our passage smooth ;  
Where the whirlpool frets and raves  
Let Thy love its anger soothe :  
All our hope is placed in Thee ;  
*Miserere Domine !*

## XI.

THE SOURCE OF THE DANUBE.

Not, like his great Compeers, indignantly  
Doth DANUBE spring to life<sup>2</sup> ! The wan-  
dering Stream  
(Who loves the Cross, yet to the Cres-  
cent's gleam  
Unfolds a willing breast) with infant glee  
Slips from his prison walls : and Fancy,  
free

To follow in his track of silver light,  
Mounts on rapt wing, and with a mo-  
ment's flight  
Hath reached the encincture of that  
gloomy sea  
Whose waves the Orphean lyre forbad to  
meet  
In conflict ; whose rough winds forgot  
their jars  
To walt the heroic progeny of Greece ;  
When the first Ship sailed for the Golden  
Fleece—  
ARGO—exalted for that daring feat  
To fix in heaven her shape distinct with  
stars.

## XII.

ON APPROACHING THE STAUB-BACH,  
LAUTERBRUNNEN.

UTTERED by whom, or how inspired—  
designed  
For what strange service, does this con-  
cert reach  
Our ears, and near the dwellings of man-  
kind !  
'Mid fields familiarised to human  
speech ?—  
No Mermaids warble—to allay the wind  
Driving some vessel toward a dangerous  
beach—  
More thrilling melodies ; Witch answer-  
ing Witch,  
To chant a love-spell, never intertwined  
Notes shrill and wild with art more  
musical :  
Alas ! that from the lips of abject Want  
Or Idleness in tatters mendicant  
The strain should flow—free Fancy to  
enthral,  
And with regret and useless pity haunt  
This bold, this bright, this sky-born,  
WATERFALL<sup>3</sup> !

## XIII.

THE FALL OF THE AAR—HANDEC.

FROM the fierce aspect of this River,  
throwing  
His giant body o'er the steep rock's brink,  
Back in astonishment and fear we shrink :

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 905.

<sup>2</sup> See Note, *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> See Note, p. 905.

But, gradually a calmer look bestowing,  
 Flowers we espy beside the torrent grow-  
 ing; 5  
 Flowers that peep forth from many a  
 cleft and chink,  
 And, from the whirlwind of his anger,  
 drink  
 Hues ever fresh, in rocky fortress blowing:  
 They suck—from breath that, threaten-  
 ing to destroy, 9  
 Is more benignant than the dewy eve—  
 Beauty, and life, and motions as of joy:  
 Nor doubt but HE to whom yon Pine-  
 trees nod  
 Their heads in sign of worship, Nature's  
 God,  
 These humbler adorations will receive.

XIV.

MEMORIAL

NEAR THE OUTLET OF THE LAKE OF THUN.

"DEM  
 ANDENKEN  
 MEINES FREUNDES  
 ALOYS REDING  
 MDCCCXVIII."

Aloys Reding, it will be remembered, was Cap-  
 tain-General of the Swiss forces, which, with a  
 courage and perseverance worthy of the cause,  
 opposed the flagitious and too successful at-  
 tempt of Buonaparte to subjugate their coun-  
 try.

AROUND a wild and woody hill  
 A gravelled pathway treading,  
 We reached a votive Stone that bears  
 The name of Aloys Reding.  
 Well judged the Friend who placed it  
 there 5  
 For silence and protection;  
 And haply with a finer care  
 Of dutiful affection.

The Sun regards it from the West;  
 And, while in summer glory 10  
 He sets, his sinking yields a type  
 Of that pathetic story:

And oft he tempts the patriot Swiss  
 Amid the grove to linger;  
 Till all is dim, save this bright Stone 15  
 Touched by his golden finger.

XV.

COMPOSED IN ONE OF THE  
 CATHOLIC CANTONS<sup>1</sup>.

DOOMED as we are our native dust  
 To wet with many a bitter shower,  
 It ill befits us to disdain  
 The altar, to deride the fane,  
 Where simple Sufferers bend, in trust 5  
 To win a happier hour.

I love, where spreads the village lawn,  
 Upon some knee-worn cell to gaze:  
 Hail to the firm unmoving cross,  
 Aloft, where pines their branches toss! 10  
 And to the chapel far withdrawn,  
 That lurks by lonely ways!

Where'er we roam—along the brink  
 Of Rhine—or by the sweeping Po,  
 Through Alpine vale, or champaign wide,  
 Whate'er we look on, at our side 16  
 Be Charity!—to bid us think,  
 And feel, if we would know.

XVI.

AFTER-THOUGHT<sup>2</sup>.

[Composed 1832.—Published 1832.]

OH Life! without thy chequered scene  
 Of right and wrong, of weal and woe,  
 Success and failure, could a ground  
 For magnanimity be found;  
 For faith, 'mid ruined hopes, serene? 5  
 Or whence could virtue flow?

[Composed 1837.—Published 1837.]

Pain entered through a ghastly breach—  
 Nor while sin lasts must effort cease;  
 Heaven upon earth's an empty boast;  
 But, for the bowers of Eden lost, 10  
 Mercy has placed within our reach  
 A portion of God's peace.

<sup>1</sup> The three stanzas comprised under this title originally (1822) formed part of the poem No. xxiv. of this series, being the 5th, 4th, and 9th stanzas of that piece. In 1827 they were detached and arranged as now to form a separate poem. In 1832 a stanza (now stanza 1. of *After-thought*, No. xvi.) was added to them. This again was taken from them in 1837, and formed, along with a second added stanza, into the independent poem entitled *After-thought*.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> See Editor's note to No. xv.

## XVII.

## SCENE ON THE LAKE OF BRIENTZ.

"WHAT know we of the Blest above  
 But that they sing and that they love?"  
 Yet, if they ever did inspire  
 A mortal hymn, or shaped the choir,  
 Now, where those harvest-Damsels float  
 Homeward in their rugged Boat, 6  
 (While all the ruffling winds are fled—  
 Each slumbering on some mountain's  
 head),  
 Now, surely, hath that gracious aid  
 Been felt, that influence is displayed. 10  
 Pupils of Heaven, in order stand  
 The rustic Maidens, every hand  
 Upon a Sister's shoulder laid,—  
 To chant, as glides the boat along,  
 A simple, but a touching, song; 15  
 To chant, as Angels do above,  
 The melodies of Peace in love!

## XVIII.

ENGELBERG, THE HILL OF ANGELS<sup>1</sup>.

FOR gentlest uses, oft-times Nature takes  
 The work of Fancy from her willing  
 hands;  
 And such a beautiful creation makes  
 As renders needless spells and magic  
 wands,  
 And for the boldest tale belief commands.  
 When first mine eyes beheld that famous  
 Hill 6  
 The sacred ENGELBERG, celestial Bands,  
 With intermingling motions soft and still,  
 Hung round its top, on wings that  
 changed their hues at will.  
 Clouds do not name those Visitants;  
 they were 10  
 The very Angels whose authentic lays,  
 Sung from that heavenly ground in mid-  
 dle air,  
 Made known the spot where piety should  
 raise  
 A holy Structure to the Almighty's praise.  
 Resplendent Apparition! if in vain 15  
 My ears did listen, 'twas enough to gaze;

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 90a.

And watch the slow departure of the  
 train,  
 Whose skirts the glowing Mountain  
 thirsted to detain.

## XIX.

## OUR LADY OF THE SNOW.

MEEK Virgin Mother, more benign  
 Than fairest Star, upon the height  
 Of thy own mountain<sup>2</sup>, set to keep  
 Lone vigils through the hours of sleep,  
 What eye can look upon thy shrine 5  
 Untroubled at the sight?  
 These crowded offerings as they hang  
 In sign of misery relieved,  
 Even these, without intent of theirs,  
 Report of comfortless despairs, 10  
 Of many a deep and cureless pang  
 And confidence deceived.  
 To Thee, in this aerial cleft,  
 As to a common centre, tend  
 All sufferers that no more rely 15  
 On mortal succour—all who sigh  
 And pine, of human hope bereft,  
 Nor wish for earthly friend.  
 And hence, O Virgin Mother mild!  
 Though plenteous flowers around thee  
 blow, 20  
 Not only from the dreary strife  
 Of Winter, but the storms of life,  
 Thee have thy Votaries aptly styled,  
 OUR LADY OF THE SNOW.  
 Even for the Man who stops not here, 25  
 But down the irriguous valley hies,  
 Thy very name, O Lady! flings,  
 O'er blooming fields and gushing springs  
 A tender sense of shadowy fear,  
 And chastening sympathies! 30  
 Nor falls that intermingling shade  
 To summer-gladness unkind:  
 It chastens only to requite  
 With gleams of fresher, purer, light;  
 While, o'er the flower-enamelled glade, 35  
 More sweetly breathes the wind.

<sup>2</sup> Mount Righi.

But on!—a tempting downward way,  
A verdant path before us lies;  
Clear shines the glorious sun above;  
Then give free course to joy and love, 40  
Deeming “the evil of the day  
Sufficient for the wise.”

XX.

EFFUSION,

IN PRESENCE OF THE PAINTED TOWER OF  
TELL, AT ALTORF.

This Tower stands upon the spot where grew the  
Linden Tree against which his Son is said to  
have been placed, when the Father's archery  
was put to proof under circumstances so famous  
in Swiss Story.

WHAT though the Italian pencil wrought  
not here,

Nor such fine skill as did the meed bestow  
On Marathonian valour, yet the tear  
Springs forth in presence of this gaudy  
show,

While narrow cares their limits overflow.  
Thrice happy, burghers, peasants, war-  
riors old, 6

Infants in arms, and ye, that as ye go  
Homeward or schoolward, ape what ye  
behold;

Heroes before your time, in frolic fancy  
bold!

And when that calm Spectatress from  
on high 10

Looks down—the bright and solitary  
Moon,

Who never gazes but to beautify;  
And snow-fed torrents, which the blaze  
of noon

Roused into fury, murmur a soft tune  
That fosters peace, and gentleness recalls;  
Then might the passing Monk receive a  
boon 16

Of saintly pleasure from these pictured  
walls,

While on the warlike groups the mellow-  
ing lustre falls.

How blest the souls who when their  
trials come

Yield not to terror or despondency, 20

But face like that sweet Boy their mortal  
doom,

Whose head the ruddy apple tops,  
while he

Expectant stands beneath the linden  
tree:

He quakes not like the timid forest game,  
But smiles—the hesitating shaft to free;  
Assured that Heaven its justice will pro-  
claim, 26

And to his Father give its own unerring  
aim.

XXI.

THE TOWN OF SCHWYTZ.

By antique Fancy trimmed—though  
lowly, bred

To dignity—in thee, O SCHWYTZ! are seen  
The genuine features of the golden mean;  
Equality by Prudence govern'd,  
Or jealous Nature ruling in her stead; 5  
And, therefore, art thou blest with peace,  
serene

As that of the sweet fields and meadows  
green

In unambitious compass round thee  
spread.

Majestic BERNE, high on her guardian  
steep,

Holding a central station of command, 10  
Might well be styled this noble body's

HEAD;  
Thou, lodged 'mid mountainous entrench-  
ments deep,

Its HEART; and ever may the heroic Land  
Thy name, O SCHWYTZ, in happy freedom  
keep!<sup>1</sup>

XXII.

ON HEARING THE “RANZ DES VACHES” ON  
THE TOP OF THE PASS OF ST. GOTHARD.

I LISTEN—but no faculty of mine  
Avails those modulations to detect,  
Which, heard in foreign lands, the Swiss  
affect

<sup>1</sup> Nearly 500 years (says Ebel, speaking of the  
French Invasion) had elapsed, when, for the first  
time, foreign soldiers were seen upon the fron-  
tiers of this small Canton, to impose upon it the  
laws of their governors.

With tenderest passion; leaving him to  
 pine  
 (So fame reports) and die,—his sweet-  
 breathed kine 5  
 Remembering, and green Alpine pastures  
 decked  
 With vernal flowers. Yet may we not  
 reject  
 The tale as fabulous.—Here while I re-  
 cline,  
 Mindful how others by this simple Strain  
 Are moved, for me—upon this Mountain  
 named 10  
 Of God himself from dread pre-eminence—  
 Aspiring thoughts, by memory reclaimed,  
 Yield to the Music's touching influence;  
 And joys of distant home my heart en-  
 chain.

## XXIII.

## FORT FUENTES.

The Ruins of Fort Fuentes form the crest of a rocky eminence that rises from the plain at the head of the lake of Como, commanding views up the Valtelline, and toward the town of Chiavenna. The prospect in the latter direction is characterised by melancholy sublimity. We rejoiced at being favoured with a distinct view of those Alpine heights; not, as we had expected from the breaking up of the storm, steeped in celestial glory, yet in communion with clouds floating or stationary—scatterings from heaven. The Ruin is interesting both in mass and in detail. An Inscription, upon elaborately-sculptured marble lying on the ground, records that the Fort had been erected by Count Fuentes in the year 1600, during the reign of Philip the Third; and the Chapel, about twenty years after, by one of his Descendants. Marble pillars of gateways are yet standing, and a considerable part of the Chapel walls: a smooth green turf has taken place of the pavement, and we could see no trace of altar or image; but everywhere something to remind one of former splendour, and of devastation and tumult. In our ascent we had passed abundance of wild vines intermingled with bushes: near the ruins were some ill tended, but growing willingly; and rock, turf, and fragments of the pile, are alike covered or adorned with a variety of flowers, among which the rose-coloured pink was grow-

ing in great beauty. While descending, we discovered on the ground, apart from the path, and at a considerable distance from the ruined Chapel, a statue of a Child in pure white marble, uninjured by the explosion that had driven it so far down the hill. "How little," we exclaimed, "are these things valued here! Could we but transport this pretty Image to our own garden!"—Yet it seemed it would have been a pity any one should remove it from its couch in the wilderness, which may be its own for hundreds of years.—*Extract from Journal.*

DREAD hour! when, upheaved by war's  
 sulphurous blast,  
 This sweet-visaged Cherub of Parian  
 stone  
 So far from the holy enclosure was cast,  
 To couch in this thicket of brambles  
 alone,

To rest where the lizard may bask in the  
 palm 5  
 Of his half-open hand pure from blemish  
 or speck;  
 And the green, gilded snake, without  
 troubling the calm  
 Of the beautiful countenance, twine  
 round his neck;

Where haply (kind service to Piety due!)  
 When winter the grove of its mantle  
 bereaves, 10  
 Some bird (like our own honoured red-  
 breast) may strew  
 The desolate Slumberer with moss and  
 with leaves.

FUENTES once harboured the good and the  
 brave,  
 Nor to her was the dance of soft  
 pleasure unknown:  
 Her banners for festal enjoyment did wave  
 While the thrill of her fides thro' the  
 mountains was blown: 16

Now gads the wild vine o'er the pathless  
 ascent:—  
 O silence of Nature, how deep is thy  
 sway,  
 When the whirlwind of human destruc-  
 tion is spent,  
 Our tumults appeased, and our strifes  
 passed away! 20

XXIV.

THE CHURCH OF SAN SALVADOR.

SEEN FROM THE LAKE OF LUGANO.

This Church was almost destroyed by lightning a few years ago, but the altar and the image of the Patron Saint were untouched. The Mount, upon the summit of which the Church is built, stands amid the intricacies of the Lake of Lugano; and is, from a hundred points of view, its principal ornament, rising to the height of 2,000 feet, and, on one side, nearly perpendicular. The ascent is toilsome; but the traveller who performs it will be amply rewarded. Splendid fertility, rich woods and dazzling waters, seclusion and confinement of view contrasted with sea-like extent of plain fading into the sky; and this again, in an opposite quarter, with an horizon of the loftiest and boldest Alps—unite in composing a prospect more diversified by magnificence, beauty, and sublimity, than perhaps any other point in Europe, of so inconsiderable an elevation, commands.

THOU sacred Pile! whose turrets rise  
From yon steep mountain's loftiest stage,  
Guarded by lone San Salvador;  
Sink (if thou must) as heretofore,  
To sulphurous bolts a sacrifice, 5  
But ne'er to human rage!

On Horeb's top, on Sinai, deigned  
To rest the universal Lord:  
Why leap the fountains from their cells  
Where everlasting Bounty dwells?— 10  
That, while the Creature is sustained,  
His God may be adored.

Cliffs, fountains, rivers, seasons, times—  
Let all remind the soul of heaven;  
Our slack devotion needs them all; 15  
And Faith—so oft of sense the thrall,  
While she, by aid of Nature, climbs—  
May hope to be forgiven.

Glory, and patriotic Love,  
And all the Poms of this frail "spot" 20  
Which men call Earth," have yearned to  
seek,

Associate with the simply meek,  
Religion in the sainted grove,  
And in the hallowed grot.

Thither, in time of adverse shocks, 25  
Of fainting hopes and backward wills,  
Did mighty Tell repair of old—  
A Hero cast in Nature's mould,  
Deliverer of the steadfast rocks  
And of the ancient hills! 30

He, too, of battle-martyrs chief!  
Who, to recall his daunted peers,  
For victory shaped an open space,  
By gathering with a wide embrace,  
Into his single breast, a sheaf 35  
Of fatal Austrian spears<sup>1</sup>.

XXV.

THE ITALIAN ITINERANT, AND THE  
SWISS GOATHERD.

PART I.

I.

Now that the farewell tear is dried,  
Heaven prosper thee, be hope thy guide!  
Hope be thy guide, adventurous Boy;  
The wages of thy travel, joy!  
Whether for London bound—to trill 5  
Thy mountain notes with simple skill;  
Or on thy head to poise a show  
Of Images in seemly row;  
The graceful form of milk-white Steed,  
Or Bird that soared with Ganymede; 10  
Or through our hamlets thou wilt bear  
The sightless Milton, with his hair  
Around his placid temples curled;  
And Shakspeare at his side—a freight,  
If clay could think and mind were weight,  
For him who bore the world! 16  
Hope be thy guide, adventurous Boy;  
The wages of thy travel, joy!

II.

But thou, perhaps, (alert as free  
Though serving sage philosophy), 20  
Wilt ramble over hill and dale,  
A Vender of the well-wrought Scale,

<sup>1</sup> Arnold Winkelried, at the battle of Sempach, broke an Austrian phalanx in this manner. The event is one of the most famous in the annals of Swiss heroism; and pictures and prints of it are frequent throughout the country.

Whose sentient tube instructs to time  
 A purpose to a fickle clime:  
 Whether thou choose this useful part, 25  
 Or minister to finer art,  
 Though robbed of many a cherished dream,  
 And crossed by many a shattered scheme,  
 What stirring wonders wilt thou see  
 In the proud Isle of liberty! 30  
 Yet will the Wanderer sometimes pine  
 With thoughts which no delights can  
 chase,

Recall a Sister's last embrace,  
 His Mother's neck entwine;  
 Nor shall forget the Maiden coy 35  
 That *would* have loved the bright-haired  
 Boy!

## III.

My Song, encouraged by the grace  
 That beams from his ingenuous face,  
 For this Adventurer scruples not  
 To prophesy a golden lot; 40  
 Due recompense, and safe return  
 To Como's steeps—his happy bourne!  
 Where he, aloft in garden-glade,  
 Shall tend, with his own dark-eyed Maid,  
 The towering maize, and prop the twig 45  
 That ill supports the luscious fig;  
 Or feed his eye in paths sun-proof  
 With purple of the trellis-roof,  
 That through the jealous leaves escapes  
 From Cadenabbia's pendent grapes. 50  
 —Oh might he tempt that Goatherd-child  
 To share his wanderings! him whose look  
 Even yet my heart can scarcely brook,  
 So touchingly he smiled—  
 As with a rapture caught from heaven—  
 For unasked alms in pity given. 56

## PART II.

## I.

WITH nodding plumes, and lightly drest  
 Like foresters in leaf-green vest,  
 The Helvetian Mountaineers, on ground  
 For Tell's dread archery renowned, 60  
 Before the target stood—to claim  
 The guerdon of the steadiest aim.  
 Loud was the rifle-gun's report—  
 A startling thunder quick and short!  
 But, flying through the heights around, 65

Echo prolonged a tell-tale sound  
 Of hearts and hands alike "prepared  
 The treasures they enjoy to guard!"  
 And, if there be a favoured hour  
 When Heroes are allowed to quit 70  
 The tomb, and on the clouds to sit  
 With tutelary power,  
 On their Descendants shedding grace—  
 This was the hour, and that the place.

## II.

But Truth inspired the Bards of old 75  
 When of an iron age they told,  
 Which to unequal laws gave birth,  
 And drove Astræa from the earth.  
 —A gentle Boy (perchance with blood  
 As noble as the best endued, 80  
 But seemingly a Thing despised;  
 Even by the sun and air unprized;  
 For not a tinge or flowery streak  
 Appeared upon his tender cheek)  
 Heart-deaf to those rebounding notes, 85  
 Apart, beside his silent goats,  
 Sate watching in a forest shed,  
 Pale, ragged, with bare feet and head;  
 Mute as the snow upon the hill,  
 And, as the saint he prays to, still. 90  
 Ah, what avails heroic deed?  
 What liberty? if no defence  
 Be won for feeble Innocence.  
 Father of all! though wilful Manhood  
 read  
 His punishment in soul-distress, 95  
 Grant to the morn of life its natural  
 blessedness!

## XXVI.

THE LAST SUPPER, BY LEONARDO DA VINCI,  
 IN THE REFECTORY OF THE CONVENT OF  
 MARIA DELLA GRAZIA—MILAN.<sup>21</sup>

THO' searching damps and many an en-  
 vious flaw  
 Have marred this Work; the calm ethe-  
 real grace,  
 The love deep-seated in the Saviour's face,  
 The mercy, goodness, have not failed to  
 awe  
 The Elements; as they do melt and thaw

<sup>1</sup> See Note p. 906.

The heart of the Beholder—and erase 6  
(At least for one rapt moment) every trace  
Of disobedience to the primal law.  
The annunciation of the dreadful truth  
Made to the Twelve, survives: lip, fore-  
head, cheek, 10  
And hand reposing on the board in ruth  
Of what it utters, while the unguilty seek  
Unquestionable meanings—still bespeak  
A labour worthy of eternal youth!

XXVII.

THE ECLIPSE OF THE SUN, 1820.

HIGH on her speculative tower  
Stood Science waiting for the hour  
When Sol was destined to endure  
That darkening of his radiant face  
Which Superstition strove to chase, 5  
Erewhile, with rites impure.

Afloat beneath Italian skies,  
Through regions fair as Paradise  
We gaily passed,—till Nature wrought  
A silent and unlooked-for change, 10  
That checked the desultory range  
Of joy and sprightly thought.

Where'er was dipped the toiling oar,  
The waves danced round us as before,  
As lightly, though of altered hue, 15  
'Mid recent coolness, such as falls  
At noontide from umbrageous walls  
That screen the morning dew.

No vapour stretched its wings; no cloud  
Cast far or near a murky shroud; 20  
The sky an azure field displayed;  
'Twas sunlight sheathed and gently  
charmed,

Of all its sparkling rays disarmed,  
And as in slumber laid,—

Or something night and day between, 25  
Like moonshine—but the hue was green;  
Still moonshine, without shadow, spread  
On jutting rock, and curv'd shore,  
Where gazed the peasant from his door,  
And on the mountain's head. 30

It tinged the Julian steeps—it lay,  
Lugano! on thy ample bay;  
The solemnising veil was drawn

O'er villas, terraces, and towers;  
To Alborgasio's olive bowers, 35  
Porlezza's verdant lawn.

But Fancy with the speed of fire  
Hath past to Milan's loftiest spire,  
And there alights 'mid that aerial host  
Of Figures human and divine<sup>1</sup>, 40  
White as the snows of Apennine  
Indurated by frost.

Awe-stricken she beholds the array  
That guards the Temple night and day;  
Angels she sees—that might from heaven  
have flown, 45

And Virgin-saints, who not in vain  
Have striven by purity to gain  
The beatific crown—

Sees long-drawn files, concentric rings  
Each narrowing above each;—the wings,  
The uplifted palms, the silent marble  
lips 51

The starry zone of sovereign height<sup>2</sup>—  
All steeped in this portentous light!  
All suffering dim eclipse!

Thus after Man had fallen (if aught 55  
These perishable spheres have wrought  
May with that issue be compared)  
Throngs of celestial visages,  
Darkening like water in the breeze,  
A holy sadness shared. 60

Lo! while I speak, the labouring Sun  
His glad deliverance has begun:  
The cypress waves her sombre plume  
More cheerily; and town and tower,  
The vineyard and the olive-bower, 65  
Their lustre re-assume!

O Ye, who guard and grace my home  
While in far-distant lands we roam,  
What countenance hath this Day put on  
for you?

While we look round with favoured eyes,  
Did sullen mists hide lake and skies 71  
And mountains from your view?

Or was it given you to behold  
Like vision, pensive though not cold,

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 906.

<sup>2</sup> Above the highest circle of figures is a zone  
of metallic stars.

From the smooth breast of gay Winander-  
mere? 75

Saw ye the soft yet awful veil  
Spread over Grasmere's lovely dale,  
Helvellyn's brow severe?

I ask in vain—and know far less  
If sickness, sorrow, or distress 80  
Have spared my Dwelling to this hour;  
Sad blindness! but ordained to prove  
Our faith in Heaven's unfailing love  
And all-controlling power.

### XXVIII.

#### THE THREE COTTAGE GIRLS.

##### I.

How blest the Maid whose heart—yet  
free

From Love's uneasy sovereignty—  
Beats with a fancy running high,  
Her simple cares to magnify;  
Whom Labour, never urged to toil, 5  
Hath cherished on a healthful soil;  
Who knows not pomp, who heeds not  
pelf;

Whose heaviest sin it is to look  
Askance upon her pretty Self  
Reflected in some crystal brook; 10  
Whom grief hath spared—who sheds no  
tear

But in sweet pity; and can hear  
Another's praise from envy clear.

##### II.

Such (but O lavish Nature! why  
That dark unfathomable eye, 15  
Where lurks a Spirit that replies  
To stillest mood of softest skies,  
Yet hints at peace to be o'erthrown,  
Another's first, and then her own?)  
Such, haply, yon ITALIAN Maid, 20  
Our Lady's laggard Votress,  
Halting beneath the chestnut shade  
To accomplish there her loveliness:  
Nice aid maternal fingers lend;  
A Sister serves with slacker hand; 25  
Then, glittering like a star, she joins the  
festal band.

##### III.

How blest (if truth may entertain  
Coy fancy with a bolder strain)  
The HELVETIAN Girl—who daily braves,  
In her light skiff, the tossing waves, 30  
And quits the bosom of the deep  
Only to climb the rugged steep!  
—Say whence that modulated shout!  
From Wood-nymph of Diana's throng?  
Or does the greeting to a rout 35  
Of giddy Bacchanals belong?  
Jubilant outcry! rock and glade  
Resounded—but the voice obeyed  
The breath of an Helvetic Maid.

##### IV.

Her beauty dazzles the thick wood; 40  
Her courage animates the flood;  
Her steps the elastic green-sward meets  
Returning reluctant sweets;  
The mountains (as ye heard) rejoice  
Aloud, saluted by her voice! 45  
Blithe Paragon of Alpine grace,  
Be as thou art—for through thy veins  
The blood of Heroes runs its race!  
And nobly wilt thou brook the chains  
That, for the virtuous, Life prepares; 50  
The fetters which the Matron wears;  
The patriot Mother's weight of anxious  
cares!

##### V.

"Sweet HIGHLAND Girl! a very shower  
Of beauty was thy earthly dower,"  
When thou didst flit before mine eyes, 55  
Gay vision under sullen skies,  
While Hope and Love around thee played,  
Near the rough Falls of Inversneyd!  
Have they, who nursed the blossom, seen  
No breach of promise in the fruit? 60  
Was joy, in following joy, as keen  
As grief can be in grief's pursuit?  
When youth had flown did hope still bless  
Thy goings—or the cheerfulness 64  
Of innocence survive to mitigate distress?

##### VI.

But from our course why turn—to tread  
A way with shadows overspread;

<sup>1</sup> See address to a Highland Girl, p. 287.

Where what we gladliest would believe  
Is feared as what may most deceive? 69  
Bright Spirit, not with amaranth crowned  
But heath-bells from thy native ground,  
Time cannot thin thy flowing hair,  
Nor take one ray of light from Thee;  
For in my Fancy thou dost share  
The gift of immortality; 75  
And there shall bloom, with Thee allied,  
The Votress by Lugano's side;  
And that intrepid Nymph, on Uri's steep  
descried!

XXIX.

THE COLUMN INTENDED BY BUONAPARTE  
FOR A TRIUMPHAL EDIFICE IN MILAN,  
NOW LYING BY THE WAY-SIDE IN THE  
SIMPLON PASS.

AMBITION—following down this far-famed  
slope  
Her Pioneer, the snow-dissolving Sun,  
While clarions prate of kingdoms to be  
won—  
Perchance, in future ages, here may stop;  
Taught to mistrust her flattering horoscope  
By admonition from this prostrate Stone!  
Memento uninscribed of Pride o'erthrown,  
Vanity's hieroglyphic; a choice trope  
In Fortune's rhetoric. Daughter of the  
Rock,  
Rest where thy course was stayed by  
Power divine! 10  
The Soul transported sees, from hint of  
thine,  
Crimes which the great Avenger's hand  
provoke,  
Hears combats whistling o'er the ensan-  
guined heath:  
What groans! what shrieks! what quiet-  
ness in death!

XXX.

STANZAS,

COMPOSED IN THE SIMPLON PASS.

VALLOMBROSA! I longed in thy shadiest  
wood  
To slumber, reclined on the moss-covered  
floor,  
To listen to ANTO's precipitous flood,

When the stillness of evening hath  
deepened its roar;  
Torange through the Temples of PAESTUM,  
to muse 5  
In POMPEII preserved by her burial in  
earth;  
On pictures to gaze where they drank in  
their hues;  
And murmur sweet songs on the ground  
of their birth!

The beauty of Florence, the grandeur of  
Rome,  
Could I leave them unseen, and not yield  
to regret? 10  
With a hope (and no more) for a season to  
come,  
Which ne'er may discharge the magnificent  
debt?  
Thou fortunate Region! whose Greatness  
inurned  
Awoke to new life from its ashes and dust;  
Twice-glorified fields! if in sadness I  
turned 15  
From your infinite marvels, the sadness  
was just.

Now, risen ere the light-footed Chamois  
retires  
From dew-sprinkled grass to heights  
guarded with snow,  
Toward the mists that hang over the land  
of my Sires,  
From the climate of myrtles contented I  
go. 20  
My thoughts become bright like yon  
edging of Pines  
On the steep's lofty verge: how it black-  
ened the air!  
But, touched from behind by the Sun, it  
now shines  
With threads that seem part of his own  
silver hair.

Though the toil of the way with dear  
Friends we divide, 25  
Though by the same zephyr our temples  
be fanned  
As we rest in the cool orange-bower side  
by side,  
A yearning survives which few hearts  
shall withstand:

Each step hath its value while homeward  
we move ;—

O joy when the girdle of England appears !  
What moment in life is so conscious of  
love, 31  
Of love in the heart made more happy by  
tears ?

## XXXI.

ECHO, UPON THE GEMMI.

WHAT beast of chase hath broken from  
the cover ?

Stern GEMMI listens to as full a cry,  
As multitudinous a harmony  
Of sounds as rang the heights of Latmos  
over,

When, from the soft couch of her sleeping  
Lover, 5

Up-starting, Cynthia skimmed the moun-  
tain-dew

In keen pursuit—and gave, where'er she  
flew,

Impetuous motion to the Stars above her.  
A solitary Wolf-dog, ranging on  
Through the bleak concave, wakes this  
wondrous chime 10

Of aery voices locked in unison,—  
Faint — far-off — near — deep — solemn  
and sublime !—

So, from the body of one guilty deed,  
A thousand ghostly fears, and haunting  
thoughts, proceed !

## XXXII.

## PROCESSIONS.

SUGGESTED ON A SABBATH MORNING IN  
THE VALE OF CHAMOUNT.

To appease the Gods ; or public thanks to  
yield ;

Or to solicit knowledge of events,  
Which in her breast Futurity concealed ;  
And that the past might have its true  
intent

Feelingly told by living monuments— 5  
Mankind of yore were prompted to devise  
Rites such as yet Persepolis presents  
Graven on her cankered walls, solemnities  
That moved in long array before admiring  
eyes.

The Hebrews thus, carrying in joyful  
state 10

Thick boughs of palm, and willows from  
the brook,

Marched round the altar—to commemo-  
rate

How, when their course they through the  
desert took,

Guided by signs which ne'er the sky for-  
sook,

They lodged in leafy tents and cabins  
low ; 15

Green boughs were borne, while, for the  
blast that shook

Down to the earth the walls of Jericho,  
Shouts rise, and storms of sound from  
lifted trumpets blow !

And thus, in order, 'mid the sacred grove  
Fed in the Libyan waste by gushing  
wells, 20

The priests and damsels of Ammonian  
Jove

Provoked responses with shrill canticles ;  
While, in a ship begirt with silver bells,  
They round his altar bore the horned  
God,

Old Cham, the solar Deity, who dwells 25  
Aloft, yet in a tilting vessel rode,  
When universal sea the mountains over-  
flowed.

Why speak of Roman Poms ? the  
haughty claims

Of Chiefs triumphant after ruthless wars ;  
The feast of Neptune—and the Cereal  
Games, 30

With images, and crowns, and empty  
cars ;

The dancing Salii—on the shields of Mars  
Smiting with fury ; and a deeper dread  
Scattered on all sides by the hideous  
jars

Of Corybantian cymbals, while the head 35  
Of Cybelè was seen, sublimely turreted !

At length a Spirit more subdued and  
soft

Appeared—to govern Christian pageant-  
ries :

The Cross, in calm procession, borne aloft  
Moved to the chant of sober litanies. 40

Even such, this day, came wafted on the breeze

From a long train—in hooded vestments fair

Enwrapt—and winding, between Alpine trees

Spiry and dark, around their House of prayer,

Below the icy bed of bright ARGENTIERE. 45

Still in the vivid freshness of a dream,  
The pageant haunts me as it met our eyes!

Still, with those white-robed Shapes—a living Stream,

The glacier Pillars join in solemn guise<sup>1</sup>  
For the same service, by mysterious ties;

Numbers exceeding credible account 51  
Of number, pure and silent Votaries

Issuing or issued from a wintry fount;  
The impenetrable heart of that exalted Mount!

They, too, who send so far a holy gleam  
While they the Church engird with motion slow, 56

A product of that awful Mountain seem,  
Poured from his vaults of everlasting snow;

Not virgin lilies marshalled in bright row,  
Not swans descending with the stealthy tide, 60

A livelier sisterly resemblance show  
Than the fair Forms, that in long order glide,

Bear to the glacier band—those Shapes aloft descried.

Trembling, I look upon the secret springs  
Of that licentious craving in the mind 65

To act the God among external things,  
To bind, on apt suggestion, or unbind;  
And marvel not that antique Faith inclined

To crowd the world with metamorphosis,  
Vouchsafed in pity or in wrath assigned;  
Such insolent temptations wouldst thou miss, 71

Avoid these sights; nor brood o'er Fable's dark abyss!

# XXXIII.

## ELEGIAC STANZAS.

The lamented Youth, whose untimely death gave occasion to these elegiac verses, was Frederick William Goddard, from Boston in North America. He was in his twentieth year, and had resided for some time with a clergyman in the neighbourhood of Geneva for the completion of his education. Accompanied by a fellow-pupil, a native of Scotland, he had just set out on a Swiss tour when it was his misfortune to fall in with a friend of mine who was hastening to join our party. The travellers, after spending a day together on the road from Berne and at Soleure, took leave of each other at night, the young men having intended to proceed directly to Zurich. But early in the morning my friend found his new acquaintances, who were informed of the object of his journey, and the friends he was in pursuit of, equipped to accompany him. We met at Lucerne the succeeding evening, and Mr. G. and his fellow-student became in consequence our travelling companions for a couple of days. We ascended the Righi together; and, after contemplating the sunrise from that noble mountain, we separated at an hour and on a spot well suited to the parting of those who were to meet no more. Our party descended through the valley of Our Lady of the Snow, and our late companions, to Art. We had hoped to meet in a few weeks at Geneva; but on the third succeeding day (on the 21st of August) Mr. Goddard perished, being overset in a boat while crossing the Lake of Zurich. His companion saved himself by swimming, and was hospitably received in the mansion of a Swiss gentleman (M. Keller) situated on the eastern coast of the lake. The corpse of poor Goddard was cast ashore on the estate of the same gentleman, who generously performed all the rites of hospitality which could be rendered to the dead as well as to the living. He caused a handsome mural monument to be erected in the church of Küssnacht, which records the premature fate of the young American, and on the shores too of the lake the traveller may read an inscription pointing out the spot where the body was deposited by the waves.

LULLED by the sound of pastoral bells,  
Rude Nature's Pilgrims did we go,  
From the dread summit of the Queen<sup>2</sup>  
Of mountains, through a deep ravine,

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 305.

<sup>2</sup> Mount Righi—Regina Montium.

|  |    |   |    |
|--|----|---|----|
| Where, in her holy chapel, dwells<br>"Our Lady of the Snow."   | 5  | Beloved by every gentle Muse<br>He left his Transatlantic home:   | 50 |
| The sky was blue, the air was mild;<br>Free were the streams and green the<br>bowers;  |    | Europe, a realised romance,<br>Had opened on his eager glance;<br>What present bliss!—what golden views!<br>What stores for years to come!              |    |
| As if, to rough assaults unknown,<br>The genial spot had <i>ever</i> shown   | 10 | Though lodged within no vigorous frame,<br>His soul her daily tasks renewed,  | 56 |
| A countenance that as sweetly smiled—<br>The face of summer-hours.   |    | Blithe as the lark on sun-gilt wings<br>High poised—or as the wren that sings<br>In shady places, to proclaim<br>Her modest gratitude.                  | 60 |
| And we were gay, our hearts at ease;<br>With pleasure dancing through the frame<br>We journeyed; all we knew of care—  | 15 | Not vain is sadly-uttered praise;<br>The words of truth's memorial vow<br>Are sweet as morning fragrance shed<br>From flowers 'mid GOLDAU's ruins bred; |    |
| Our path that straggled here and there;<br>Of trouble—but the fluttering breeze;<br>Of Winter—but a name.  |    | As evening's fondly-lingering rays,   | 65 |
| If foresight could have rent the veil<br>Of three short days—but hush—no more!   |    | On RICH's silent brow.  |    |
| Calm is the grave, and calmer none   | 21 | Lamented youth! to thy cold clay<br>Fit obsequies the Stranger paid;<br>And piety shall guard the Stone<br>Which hath not left the spot unknown         | 70 |
| Than that to which thy cares are gone,<br>Thou Victim of the stormy gale;<br>Asleep on ZURICH's shore!   |    | Where the wild waves resigned their<br>prey—<br>And <i>that</i> which marks thy bed.  |    |
| Oh GODDARD!—what art thou?—a name—<br>A sunbeam followed by a shade!   | 26 | And, when thy Mother weeps for Thee,<br>Lost Youth! a solitary Mother;<br>This tribute from a casual Friend   | 75 |
| Nor more, for aught that time supplies,<br>The great, the experienced, and the wise:<br>Too much from this frail earth we claim,<br>And therefore are betrayed.                                      | 30 | A not unwelcome aid may lend,<br>To feed the tender luxury,<br>The rising pang to smother <sup>1</sup> .  |    |
| We met, while festive mirth ran wild,<br>Where, from a deep lake's mighty urn,<br>Forth slips, like an enfranchised slave,<br>A sea-green river, proud to lave,<br>With current swift and undefiled, | 35 |   |    |
| The towers of old LUCERNE.   |    |   |    |
| We parted upon solemn ground<br>Far-lifted towards the unfading sky;<br>But all our thoughts were <i>then</i> of Earth,<br>That gives to common pleasures birth;                                     | 40 |   |    |
| And nothing in our hearts we found<br>That prompted even a sigh.   |    |   |    |
| Fetch, sympathising Powers of air,<br>Fetch, ye that post o'er seas and lands,<br>Herbs moistened by Virginian dew,  | 45 |   |    |
| A most untimely grave to strew,<br>Whose turf may never know the care<br>Of <i>kindred</i> human hands!  |    |   |    |

## XXXIV.

SKY-PROSPECT—FROM THE PLAIN OF  
FRANCE.

Lo! in the burning west, the craggy nape  
Of a proud Ararat! and, thereupon,  
The Ark, her melancholy voyage done!  
Yon rampant cloud mimics a lion's shape;  
There, combats a huge crocodile—agape

<sup>1</sup> The persuasion here expressed was not groundless. The first human consolation that the afflicted Mother felt was derived from this tribute to her son's memory, a fact which the author learned, at his own residence, from her Daughter, who visited Europe some years afterwards.—Goldau is one of the villages desolated by the fall of part of the Mountain Rossberg.

A golden spear to swallow! and that  
brown  
And massy grove, so near yon blazing  
town,  
Stirs and recedes—destruction to escape!  
Yet all is harmless—as the Elysian shades  
Where Spirits dwell in undisturbed re-  
pose— 10  
Silently disappears, or quickly fades:  
Meek Nature's evening comment on the  
shows  
That for oblivion take their daily birth  
From all the fuming vanities of Earth!

XXXV.

ON BEING STRANDED NEAR THE HARBOUR  
OF BOULOGNE<sup>1</sup>.

WHY cast ye back upon the Gallic shore,  
Ye furious waves! a patriotic Son  
Of England—who in hope her coast had  
won,  
His project crowned, his pleasant travel  
o'er?  
Well—let him pace this noted beach once  
more, 5  
That gave the Roman his triumphal  
shells;  
That saw the Corsican his cap and bells  
Haughtily shake, a dreaming Con-  
queror!—  
Enough: my Country's cliffs I can behold,  
And proudly think, beside the chafing  
sea, 10  
Of checked ambition, tyranny controlled,  
And folly cursed with endless memory:  
These local recollections ne'er can cloy;  
Such ground I from my very heart enjoy!

XXXVI.

AFTER LANDING—THE VALLEY OF DOVER.  
NOVEMBER, 1820.

WHERE be the noisy followers of the  
game  
Which faction breeds? the turmoil where,  
that passed  
Through Europe, echoing from the news-  
man's blast,

And filled our hearts with grief for  
England's shame?  
Peace greets us;—rambling on without  
an aim 5  
We mark majestic herds of cattle, free  
To ruminate, couched on the grassy lea;  
And hear far-off the mellow horn proclaim  
The Season's harmless pastime. Ruder  
sound  
Stirs not; enrapt I gaze with strange  
delight, 10  
While consciousnesses, not to be disowned,  
Here only serve a feeling to invite  
That lifts the spirit to a calmer height,  
And makes this rural stillness more pro-  
found.

XXXVII.

AT DOVER.

[Composed 1837.—Published: Sonnet-vol. of 1838;  
ed. 1846.]

FROM the Pier's head, musing, and with  
increase  
Of wonder, I have watched this sea-side  
Town,  
Under the white cliff's battlemented  
crown,  
Hushed to a depth of more than Sabbath  
peace:  
The streets and quays are thronged, but  
why disown 5  
Their natural utterance? whence this  
strange release  
From social noise—silence elsewhere un-  
known?—  
A Spirit whispered, "Let all wonder  
cease;  
Ocean's o'erpowering murmurs have set  
free  
Thy sense from pressure of life's common  
din; 10  
As the dread Voice that speaks from out  
the sea  
Of God's eternal Word, the Voice of  
Time  
Doth deaden, shocks of tumult, shrieks of  
crime,  
The shouts of folly, and the groans of  
sin."

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 966.

## XXXVIII.

## DESULTORY STANZAS,

UPON RECEIVING THE PRECEDING SHEETS  
FROM THE PRESS.

[Composed 1822.—Published 1822.]

Is then the final page before me spread,  
Nor further outlet left to mind or heart?  
Presumptuous Book! too forward to be  
read,

How can I give thee license to depart?  
One tribute more: unbidden feelings  
start

Forth from their coverts; slighted objects  
rise;

My spirit is the scene of such wild art  
As on Parnassus rules, when lightning  
flies,

Visibly leading on the thunder's har-  
monies.

All that I saw returns upon my view,    10  
All that I heard comes back upon my  
ear,

All that I felt this moment doth renew;  
And where the foot with no unmanly fear  
Recoiled—and wings alone could travel—  
there

I move at ease; and meet contending  
themes

That press upon me, crossing the career    15  
Of recollections vivid as the dreams  
Of midnight,—cities, plains, forests, and  
mighty streams.

Where Mortal never breathed I dare to  
sit

Among the interior Alps, gigantic crew,   20  
Who triumphed o'er diluvian power!—  
and yet

What are they but a wreck and residue,  
Whose only business is to perish!—true  
To which sad course, these wrinkled Sons  
of Time

Labour their proper greatness to sub-  
due;

Speaking of death alone, beneath a clime   25  
Where life and rapture flow in plenitude  
sublime.

Fancy hath flung for me an airy bridge  
Across thy long deep Valley, furious  
Rhône!

Arch that *here* rests upon the granite  
ridge

Of Monte Rosa—*there* on frailer stone   30  
Of secondary birth, the Jung-frau's cone;  
And, from that arch, down-looking on the  
Vale

The aspect I behold of every zone;  
A sea of foliage, tossing with the gale,   35  
Blithe Autumn's purple crown, and  
Winter's icy mail!

Far as St. MAURICE, from yon eastern  
Forks<sup>1</sup>,

Down the main avenue my sight can  
range:

And all its branchy vales, and all that  
lurks

Within them, church, and town, and hut,  
and grange,   40

For my enjoyment meet in vision strange;  
Snows, torrents;—to the region's utmost  
bound,

Life, Death, in amicable interchange;—  
But list! the avalanche—the hush pro-  
found

That follows—yet more awful than that  
awful sound!   45

Is not the chamois suited to his place?  
The eagle worthy of her ancestry?  
—Let Empires fall; but ne'er shall Ye  
disgrace

Your noble birthright, ye that occupy  
Your council-seats beneath the open  
sky,   50

On Sarnen's Mount<sup>2</sup>, there judge of fit  
and right,   D

In simple democratic majesty;  
Soft breezes fanning your rough brows—  
the might

And purity of nature spread before your  
sight!

From this appropriate Court renowned  
LUCERNE   55

<sup>1</sup> At the head of the Valais. See Note, p. 906.

<sup>2</sup> See Note, p. 906.

Calls me to pace her honoured Bridge<sup>1</sup>—  
that cheers  
The Patriot's heart with pictures rude and  
stern,  
An uncouth Chronicle of glorious years.  
Like portraiture, from loftier source,  
endears  
That work of kindred frame, which spans  
the lake 60  
Just at the point of issue, where it fears  
The form and motion of a stream to  
take;  
Where it begins to stir, *yet* voiceless as a  
snake.  
  
Volumes of sound, from the Cathedral  
rolled,  
This long-roofed Vista penetrate—but  
see, 65  
One after one, its tablets, that unfold  
The whole design of Scripture history;  
From the first tasting of the fatal Tree,  
Till the bright Star appeared in eastern  
skies,  
Announcing, ONE was born mankind to  
free; 70  
His acts, his wrongs, his final sacrifice;  
Lessons for every heart, a Bible for all  
eyes.

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 906.

*Our* pride misleads, our timid likings  
kill.  
—Long may these homely Works devised  
of old,  
These simple efforts of Helvetian skill, 75  
Aid, with congenial influence, to uphold  
The State,—the Country's destiny to  
mould;  
Turning, for them who pass, the common  
dust  
Of servile opportunity to gold;  
Filling the soul with sentiments au-  
gust— 80  
The beautiful, the brave, the holy, and  
the just!  
  
No more; Time halts not in his noiseless  
march—  
Nor turns, nor winds, as doth the liquid  
flood;  
Life slips from underneath us, like that  
arch  
Of airy workmanship whereon westood, 85  
Earth stretched below, heaven in our  
neighbourhood.  
Go forth, my little Book! pursue thy way;  
Go forth, and please the gentle and the  
good;  
Nor be a whisper stifled, if it say  
That treasures, yet untouched, may grace  
some future Lay. 90

# MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN ITALY<sup>1</sup>,

1837.

## TO HENRY CRABB ROBINSON.

COMPANION! by whose buoyant Spirit cheered,  
In whose experience trusting, day by day  
Treasures I gained with zeal that neither feared  
The toils nor felt the crosses of the way,  
These records take, and happy should I be  
Were but the Gift a meet Return to thee  
For kindnesses that never ceased to flow,  
And prompt self-sacrifice to which I owe  
Far more than any heart but mine can know.

W. WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT,

Feb. 14th, 1842.

The Tour of which the following Poems are very inadequate remembrances was shortened by report, too well founded, of the prevalence of Cholera at Naples. To make some amends for what was reluctantly left unseen in the South of Italy, we visited the Tuscan Sanctuaries among the Apennines, and the principal Italian Lakes among the Alps. Neither of those lakes, nor of Venice, is there any notice in these Poems, chiefly because I have touched upon them elsewhere. See, in particular, "Descriptive Sketches," "Memorials of a Tour on the Continent in 1820," and a Sonnet upon the extinction of the Venetian Republic.

## I.

### MUSINGS NEAR AQUAPENDENTE.

APRIL, 1837.

[Composed 1837.—Published: vol. of 1842.]

YE Apennines! with all your fertile vales  
Deeply embosomed, and your winding  
shores

Of either sea, an Islander by birth,

A Mountaineer by habit, would resound  
Your praise, in meet accordance with  
your claims

Bestowed by Nature, or from man's great  
deeds

Inherited:—presumptuous thought!—it  
fled

Like vapour, like a towering cloud, dis-  
solved.

Not, therefore, shall my mind give way to  
sadness;—

Yon snow-white torrent-fall, plumb down  
it drops

Yet ever hangs or seems to hang in air,  
Lulling the leisure of that high-perched  
town,

AQUAPENDENTE, in her lofty site  
Its neighbour and its namesake—town,  
and flood

Forth flashing out of its own gloomy  
chasm

Bright sunbeams—the fresh verdure of  
this lawn

Strewn with grey rocks, and on the  
horizon's verge,

O'er intervenient waste, through glimmer-  
ing haze,

Unquestionably kenned, that cone-shaped  
hill

With fractured summit, no indifferent  
sight

To travellers, from such comforts as are  
thine,

Bleak Radicofani! escaped with joy—  
These are before me; and the varied scene

May well suffice, till noon-tide's sultry  
heat

<sup>1</sup> This group of Poems first appeared in the volume entitled *Poems, Chiefly of Early and Late Years*, published in 1842. The Sonnets all, or almost all, belong to the year, December, 1840—December, 1841. Where no note recording dates of composition and of publication is given, it is to be assumed that the poem was written in 1840–41, and published (as described above) in 1842.—Ed.

Relax, to fix and satisfy the mind 25  
 Passive yet pleased. What! with this  
 Broom in flower  
 Close at my side! She bids me fly to greet  
 Her sisters, soon like her to be attired  
 With golden blossoms opening at the feet  
 Of my own Fairfield. The glad greeting  
 given, 30  
 Given with a voice and by a look re-  
 turned  
 Of old companionship, Time counts not  
 minutes  
 Ere, from accustomed paths, familiar  
 fields,  
 The local Genius hurries me aloft, 34  
 Transported over that cloud-wooing hill,  
 Seat Sandal, a fond suitor of the clouds,  
 With dream-like smoothness, to Hel-  
 velyn's top,  
 There to alight upon crisp moss and range,  
 Obtaining ampler boon, at every step,  
 Of visual sovereignty — hills multitu-  
 dinous, 40  
 (Not Apennine can boast of fairer), hills  
 Pride of two nations, wood and lake and  
 plains,  
 And prospect right below of deep coves  
 shaped  
 By skeleton arms, that, from the moun-  
 tain's trunk  
 Extended, clasp the winds, with mutual  
 moan 45  
 Struggling for liberty, while undis-  
 mayed  
 The shepherd struggles with them. On-  
 ward thence  
 And downward by the skirt of Greenside  
 fell,  
 And by Glenridding-screes, and low Glen-  
 coign,  
 Places forsaken now, though loving still 50  
 The Muses, as they loved them in the  
 days  
 Of the old minstrels and the border  
 bards.—  
 But here am I fast bound; and let it pass,  
 The simple rapture;—who that travels far  
 To feed his mind with watchful eyes could  
 share 55  
 Or wish to share it?—One there surely  
 was,

"The Wizard of the North," with anxious  
 hope  
 Brought to this genial climate, when  
 disease  
 Preyed upon body and mind—yet not the  
 less  
 Had his sunk eye kindled at those dear  
 words 60  
 That spake of bards and minstrels; and  
 his spirit  
 Had flown with mine to old Helvellyn's  
 brow,  
 Where once together, in his day of  
 strength,  
 We stood rejoicing, as if earth were free  
 From sorrow, like the sky above our  
 heads. 65  
 Years followed years, and when, upon  
 the eve  
 Of his last going from Tweed-side, thought  
 turned,  
 Or by another's sympathy was led,  
 To this bright land, Hope was for him no  
 friend,  
 Knowledge no help; Imagination shaped  
 No promise. Still, in more than ear-deep  
 seats, 71  
 Survives for me, and cannot but survive  
 The tone of voice which wedded borrowed  
 words  
 To sadness not their own, when, with  
 faint smile  
 Forced by intent to take from speech its  
 edge, 75  
 He said, "When I am there, although 'tis  
 fair,  
 'Twill be another Yarrow." Prophecy  
 More than fulfilled, as gay Campania's  
 shores  
 Soon witnessed, and the city of seven hills,  
 Her sparkling fountains, and her moulder-  
 ing tombs; 80  
 And more than all, that Eminence which  
 showed  
 Her splendours, seen, not felt, the while  
 he stood  
 A few short steps (painful they were)  
 apart  
 From Tasso's Convent-haven, and retired  
 grave.

Peace to their Spirits! why should  
 Poesy 85  
 Yield to the lure of vain regret, and hover  
 In gloom on wings with confidence out-  
 spread  
 To move in sunshine?—Utter thanks, my  
 Soul!  
 Tempered with awe, and sweetened by  
 compassion  
 For them who in the shades of sorrow  
 dwell, 90  
 That I—so near the term to human life  
 Appointed by man's common heritage,  
 Frail as the frailest, one withal (if that  
 Deserve a thought) but little known to  
 fame—  
 Am free to rove where Nature's loveliest  
 looks, 95  
 Art's noblest relics, history's rich be-  
 quests,  
 Failed to reanimate and but feebly cheered  
 The whole world's Darling—free to rove  
 at will  
 O'er high and low, and if requiring rest,  
 Rest from enjoyment only.  
 Thanks poured forth 100  
 For what thus far hath blessed my wander-  
 ings, thanks  
 Fervent but humble as the lips can breathe  
 Where gladness seems a duty—let me  
 guard  
 Those seeds of expectation which the fruit  
 Already gathered in this favoured Land  
 Enfold within its core. The faith be  
 mine, 106  
 That He who guides and governs all,  
 approves  
 When gratitude, though disciplined to  
 look  
 Beyond these transient spheres, doth wear  
 a crown  
 Of earthly hope put on with trembling  
 hand; 110  
 Nor is least pleased, we trust, when golden  
 beams,  
 Reflected through the mists of age, from  
 hours  
 Of innocent delight, remote or recent,  
 Shoot but a little way—'tis all they can—  
 Into the doubtful future. Who would  
 keep 115

Power must resolve to cleave to it through  
 life,  
 Else it deserts him, surely as he lives.  
 Saints would not grieve nor guardian  
 angels frown  
 If one—while tossed, as was my lot to be,  
 In a frail bark urged by two slender  
 oars 120  
 Over waves rough and deep, that, when  
 they broke,  
 Dashed their white foam against the  
 palace walls  
 Of Genoa the superb—should there be led  
 To meditate upon his own appointed tasks,  
 However humble in themselves, with  
 thoughts 125  
 Raised and sustained by memory of Him  
 Who oftentimes within those narrow  
 bounds  
 Rocked on the surge, there tried his  
 spirit's strength  
 And grasp of purpose, long ere sailed his  
 ship  
 To lay a new world open.  
 Nor less prized 130  
 Be those impressions which incline the  
 heart  
 To mild, to lowly, and to seeming weak,  
 Bend that way her desires. The dew, the  
 storm—  
 The dew whose moisture fell in gentle  
 drops  
 On the small hyssop destined to be-  
 come, 135  
 By Hebrew ordinance devoutly kept,  
 A purifying instrument—the storm  
 That shook on Lebanon the cedar's top,  
 And as it shook, enabling the blind roots  
 Further to force their way, endowed its  
 trunk 140  
 With magnitude and strength fit to up-  
 hold  
 The glorious temple—did alike proceed  
 From the same gracious will, were both an  
 offspring  
 Of bounty infinite.  
 Between Powers that aim  
 Higher to lift their lofty heads, im-  
 pelled 145  
 By no profane ambition, Powers that  
 thrive

By conflict, and their opposites, that trust  
 In lowliness—a mid-way tract there lies  
 Of thoughtful sentiment for every mind  
 Pregnant with good. Young, Middle-  
 aged, and Old, 150  
 From century on to century, must have  
 known  
 The emotion—nay, more fitly were it  
 said—  
 The blest tranquillity that sunk so deep  
 Into my spirit, when I paced, enclosed  
 In Pisa's Campo Santo, the smooth  
 floor 155  
 Of its Arcades paved with sepulchral  
 slabs,  
 And through each window's open fret-  
 work looked  
 O'er the blank Area of sacred earth  
 Fetched from Mount Calvary, or haply  
 delved  
 In precincts nearer to the Saviour's  
 tomb, 160  
 By hands of men, humble as brave, who  
 fought  
 For its deliverance—a capacious field  
 That to descendants of the dead it holds  
 And to all living mute memento breathes,  
 More touching far than aught which on  
 the walls 165  
 Is pictured, or their epitaphs can speak,  
 Of the changed City's long-departed  
 power,  
 Glory, and wealth, which, perilous as  
 they are,  
 Here did not kill, but nourished, Piety.  
 And, high above that length of cloistral  
 roof, 170  
 Peering in air and backed by azure sky,  
 To kindred contemplations ministers  
 The Baptistery's dome, and that which  
 swells  
 From the Cathedral pile; and with the  
 twain  
 Conjoined in prospect mutable or fixed 175  
 (As hurry on in eagerness the feet,  
 Or pause) the summit of the Leaning-  
 tower.  
 Nor less remuneration waits on him  
 Who having left the Cemetery stands  
 In the Tower's shadow, of decline and  
 fall 180

Admonished not without some sense of  
 fear,  
 Fear that soon vanishes before the sight  
 Of splendour unextinguished, pomp un-  
 scathed,  
 And beauty unimpaired. Grand in itself,  
 And for itself, the assemblage, grand and  
 fair 185  
 To view, and for the mind's consenting  
 eye  
 A type of age in man, upon its front  
 Bearing the world-acknowledged evidence  
 Of past exploits, nor fondly after more  
 Struggling against the stream of destiny,  
 But with its peaceful majesty content. 191  
 —Oh what a spectacle at every turn  
 The Place unfolds, from pavement skin-  
 ned with moss,  
 Or grass-grown spaces, where the heavi-  
 est foot  
 Provokes no echoes, but must softly  
 tread; 195  
 Where Solitude with Silence paired stops  
 short  
 Of Desolation, and to Ruin's scythe  
 Decay submits not.  
 But where'er my steps  
 Shall wander, chiefly let me cull with  
 care  
 Those images of genial beauty, oft 200  
 Too lovely to be pensive in themselves  
 But by reflexion made so, which do best  
 And fittest serve to crown with fragrant  
 wreaths  
 Life's cup when almost filled with years,  
 like mine.  
 —How lovely robed in forenoon light  
 and shade, 205  
 Each ministering to each, didst thou  
 appear  
 Savona, Queen of territory fair  
 As aught that marvellous coast thro' all  
 its length  
 Yields to the Stranger's eye. Remem-  
 brance holds  
 As a selected treasure thy one cliff, 210  
 That, while it wore for melancholy crest  
 A shattered Convent, yet rose proud to  
 have  
 Clinging to its steep sides a thousand  
 herbs

And shrubs, whose pleasant looks gave  
proof how kind  
The breath of air can be where earth  
had else 215  
Seemed churlish. And behold, both far  
and near,  
Garden and field all decked with orange  
bloom,  
And peach and citron, in Spring's mild-  
est breeze  
Expanding; and, along the smooth shore  
curved  
Into a natural port, a tideless sea, 220  
To that mild breeze with motion and  
with voice  
Softly responsive; and, attuned to all  
Those vernal charms of sight and sound,  
appeared  
Smooth space of turf which from the  
guardian fort  
Sloped seaward, turf whose tender April  
green, 225  
In coolest climes too fugitive, might even  
here  
Plead with the sovereign Sun for longer  
stay  
Than his unmitigated beams allow,  
Nor plead in vain, if beauty could pre-  
serve,  
From mortal change, aught that is born  
on earth 230  
Or doth on time depend.  
While on the brink  
Of that high Convent-crested cliff I  
stood,  
Modest Savona! over all did brood  
A pure poetic Spirit—as the breeze,  
Mild—as the verdure, fresh—the sun-  
shine, bright— 235  
Thy gentle Chiabrera!—not a stone,  
Mural or level with the trodden floor,  
In Church or Chapel, if my curious quest  
Missed not the truth, retains a single  
name  
Of young or old, warrior, or saint, or sage,  
To whose dear memories his sepulchral  
verse 241  
Paid simple tribute, such as might have  
flowed  
From the clear spring of a plain English  
heart,

Say rather, one in native fellowship  
With all who want not skill to couple  
grief 245  
With praise, as genuine admiration  
prompts.  
The grief, the praise, are severed from  
their dust,  
Yet in his page the records of that worth  
Survive, uninjured;—glory then to words,  
Honour to word-preserving Arts, and  
hail 250  
Ye kindred local influences that still,  
If Hope's familiar whispers merit faith,  
Await my steps when they the breezy  
height  
Shall range of philosophic Tusculum;  
Or Sabine vales explored inspire a wish  
To meet the shade of Horace by the  
side 256  
Of his Bandusian fount; or I invoke  
His presence to point out the spot where  
once  
He sate, and eulogised with earnest pen  
Peace, leisure, freedom, moderate de-  
sires; 260  
And all the immunities of rural life  
Extolled, behind Vacuna's crumbling fane.  
Or let me loiter, soothed with what is  
given,  
Nor asking more, on that delicious Bay,  
Parthenope's Domain—Virgilian haunt,  
Illustrated with never-dying verse, 266  
And, by the Poet's laurel-shaded tomb,  
Age after age to Pilgrims from all lands  
Endeared.  
And who—if not a man as cold  
In heart as dull in brain—while pacing  
ground 270  
Chosen by Rome's legendary Bards, high  
minds  
Out of her early struggles well inspired  
To localise heroic acts—could look  
Upon the spots with undelighted eye,  
Though even to their last syllable the  
Lays 275  
And very names of those who gave them  
birth  
Have perished?—Verily, to her utmost  
depth,  
Imagination feels what Reason fears not  
To recognise, the lasting virtue lodged

In those bold fictions that, by deeds  
 assigned 280  
 To the Valerian, Fabian, Curian Race,  
 And others like in fame, created Powers  
 With attributes from History derived,  
 By Poesy irradiate, and yet graced,  
 Through marvellous felicity of skill, 285  
 With something more propitious to high  
 aims  
 Than either, pent within her separate  
 sphere,  
 Can oft with justice claim.  
 And not disdaining  
 Union with those primeval energies  
 To virtue consecrate, stoop ye from your  
 height 290  
 Christian Traditions ! at my Spirit's call  
 Descend, and, on the brow of ancient  
 Rome  
 As she survives in ruin, manifest  
 Your glories mingled with the brightest  
 hues  
 Of her memorial halo, fading, fading, 295  
 But never to be extinct while Earth  
 endures.  
 O come, if undishonoured by the prayer,  
 From all her Sanctuaries !—Open for my  
 feet  
 Ye Catacombs, give to mine eyes a  
 glimpse  
 Of the Devout, as, 'mid your glooms  
 convened 300  
 For safety, they of yore enclasped the  
 Cross  
 On knees that ceased from trembling, or  
 intoned  
 Their orisons with voices half-suppressed,  
 But sometimes heard, or fancied to be  
 heard,  
 Even at this hour.  
 And thou Mamertine prison, 305  
 Into that vault receive me from whose  
 depth  
 Issues, revealed in no presumptuous vi-  
 sion,  
 Albeit lifting human to divine,  
 A Saint, the Church's Rock, the mystic  
 Keys  
 Grasped in his hand ; and lo ! with up-  
 right sword 310  
 Prefiguring his own impendent doom,

The Apostle of the Gentiles ; both pre-  
 pared  
 To suffer pains with heathen scorn and  
 hate  
 Inflicted ;—blessèd Men, for so to Heaven  
 They follow their dear Lord !  
 Time flows—nor winds, 315  
 Nor stagnates, nor precipitates his course,  
 But many a benefit borne upon his breast  
 For human-kind sinks out of sight, is  
 gone,  
 No one knows how ; nor seldom is put  
 forth 319  
 An angry arm that snatches good away,  
 Never perhaps to reappear. The Stream  
 Has to our generation brought and brings  
 Innumerable gains ; yet we, who now  
 Walk in the light of day, pertain full  
 surely  
 To a chilled age, most pitiaibly shut out  
 From that which is and actuates, by  
 forms, 326  
 Abstractions, and by lifeless fact to fact  
 Minutely linked with diligence unin-  
 spired,  
 Unrectified, unguided, unsustained,  
 By godlike insight. To this fate is  
 doomed 330  
 Science, wide-spread and spreading still  
 as be  
 Her conquests, in the world of sense made  
 known.  
 So with the internal mind it fares ; and so  
 With morals, trusting, in contempt or  
 fear  
 Of vital principle's controlling law, 335  
 To her purblind guide Expediency ;  
 and so  
 Suffers religious faith. Elate with view  
 Of what is won, we overlook or scorn  
 The best that should keep pace with it,  
 and must,  
 Else more and more the general mind  
 will droop, 340  
 Even as if bent on perishing. There  
 lives  
 No faculty within us which the Soul  
 Can spare, and humblest earthly Weal  
 demands,  
 For dignity not placed beyond her reach,  
 Zealous co-operation of all means 345

Given or acquired, to raise us from the mire,  
And liberate our hearts from low pursuits.

By gross Utilities enslaved we need 348  
More of ennobling impulse from the past,  
If to the future aught of good must come  
Sounder and therefore holier than the ends  
Which, in the giddiness of self-applause,  
We covet as supreme. O grant the crown  
That Wisdom wears, or take his treacherous staff

From Knowledge!—If the Muse, whom  
I have served 355  
This day, be mistress of a single pearl  
Fit to be placed in that pure diadem;  
Then, not in vain, under these chestnut boughs

Reclined, shall I have yielded up my soul  
To transports from the secondary founts  
Flowing of time and place, and paid to both 361

Due homage; nor shall fruitlessly have striven,

By love of beauty moved, to enshrine in verse

Accordant meditations, which in times  
Vexed and disordered, as our own, may shed 365

Influence, at least among a scattered few,  
To soberness of mind and peace of heart  
Friendly; as here to my repose hath been  
This flowering broom's dear neighbourhood, the light

And murmur issuing from yon pendent flood, 370

And all the varied landscape. Let us now  
Rise, and to-morrow greet magnificent  
Rome<sup>1</sup>.

## II.

### THE PINE OF MONTE MARIO AT ROME.

I SAW far off the dark top of a Pine  
Look like a cloud—a slender stem the tie

That bound it to its native earth—poised high

'Mid evening hues, along the horizon line,

Striving in peace each other to out-shine.

But when I learned the Tree was living there, 5

Saved from the sordid axe by Beaumont's care,

Oh, what a gush of tenderness was mine!

The rescued Pine-tree, with its sky so bright

And cloud-like beauty, rich in thoughts of home, 10

Death-parted friends, and days too swift in flight,

Supplanted the whole majesty of Rome  
(Then first apparent from the Pincian Height)

Crowned with St. Peter's everlasting Dome<sup>2</sup>.

## III.

### AT ROME.

Is this, ye Gods, the Capitolian Hill?

Yon petty Steep in truth the fearful Rock,

Tarpeian named of yore, and keeping still

That name, a local Phantom proud to mock

The Traveller's expectation?—Could our Will 5

Destroy the ideal Power within, 'twere done

Thro' what men see and touch,—slaves wandering on,

Impelled by thirst of all but Heaven-taught skill.

Full oft, our wish obtained, deeply we sigh;

Yet not unrecompensed are they who learn, 10

From that depression raised, to mount on high

With stronger wing, more clearly to discern

Eternal things; and, if need be, defy  
Change, with a brow not insolent, though stern.

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 907.

<sup>2</sup> See Note, p. 907.

IV.

AT ROME.—REGRETS.—IN ALLUSION TO  
NIEBUHR, AND OTHER MODERN HISTO-  
RIANS.

THOSE old credulities, to nature dear,  
Shall they no longer bloom upon the stock  
Of History, stript naked as a rock  
'Mid a dry desert? What is it we hear?  
The glory of Infant Rome must dis-  
appear,  
Her morning splendours vanish, and their  
place  
Know them no more. If Truth, who  
veiled her face  
With those bright beams yet hid it not,  
must steer  
Henceforth a humbler course perplexed  
and slow;  
One solace yet remains for us who came  
Into this world in days when story lacked  
Severe research, that in our hearts we  
know  
How, for exciting youth's heroic flame,  
Assent is power, belief the soul of fact.

V.

CONTINUED.

COMPLACENT Fictions were they, yet the  
same  
Involved a history of no doubtful sense,  
History that proves by inward evidence  
From what a precious source of truth it  
came.  
Ne'er could the boldest Eulogist have  
dared  
Such deeds to paint, such characters to  
frame,  
But for coeval sympathy prepared  
To greet with instant faith their loftiest  
claim.  
None but a noble people could have loved  
Flattery in Ancient Rome's pure-minded  
style:  
Not in like sort the Runic Scald was  
moved;  
He, nursed 'mid savage passions that  
defile  
Humanity, sang feats that well might call  
For the blood-thirsty mead of Odin's  
riotous Hall.

VI.

PLEA FOR THE HISTORIAN.

FORBEAR to deem the Chronicler unwise,  
Ungentle, or untouched by seemly ruth,  
Who, gathering up all that Time's en-  
vious tooth  
Has spared of sound and grave realities,  
Firmly rejects those dazzling flatteries, 5  
Dear as they are to unsuspecting Youth,  
That might have drawn down Clio from  
the skies  
To vindicate the majesty of truth.  
Such was her office while she walked with  
men,  
A Muse, who, not unmindful of her Sire  
All-ruling Jove, whate'er the theme  
might be  
Revered her Mother, sage Mnemosyne, 11  
And taught her faithful servants how the  
lyre  
Should animate, but not mislead, the pen<sup>1</sup>.

VII.

AT ROME.

THEY—who have seen the noble Roman's  
scorn  
Break forth at thought of laying down  
his head,  
When the blank day is over, garreted  
In his ancestral palace, where, from morn  
To night, the desecrated floors are worn 5  
By feet of purse-proud strangers; they—  
who have read  
In one meek smile, beneath a peasant's shod,  
How patiently the weight of wrong is  
borne;  
They—who have heard some learned  
Patriot treat  
Of freedom, with mind grasping the  
whole theme 10  
From ancient Rome, downwards through  
that bright dream  
Of Commonwealths, each city a starlike  
seat  
Of rival glory; they—fallen Italy—  
Nor must, nor will, nor can, despair of  
Thee!

<sup>1</sup> Quem virum——lyra——  
——sumes celebrare Clio?

## VIII.

NEAR ROME, IN SIGHT OF ST. PETER'S.

LONG has the dew been dried on tree and lawn;

O'er man and beast a not unwelcome boon  
Is shed, the languor of approaching noon;  
To shady rest withdrawing or withdrawn  
Mute are all creatures, as this couchant fawn,

Save insect-swarms that hum in air  
afloat,

Save that the Cock is crowing, a shrill note,

Startling and shrill as that which roused the dawn.

—Heard in that hour, or when, as now, the nerve

Shrinks from the note as from a mis-timed thing,

Oft for a holy warning may it serve,  
Charged with remembrance of his sudden sting,

His bitter tears, whose name the Papal Chair

And yon resplendent Church are proud to bear.

## IX.

AT ALBANO.

DAYS passed—and Monte Calvo would not clear

His head from mist; and, as the wind sobbed through

Albano's dripping Ilex avenue,  
My dull forebodings in a Peasant's ear  
Found casual vent. She said, "Be of good cheer;

Our yesterday's procession did not sue  
In vain; the sky will change to sunny blue,

Thanks to our Lady's grace." I smiled to hear,

But not in scorn:—the Matron's Faith may lack

The heavenly sanction needed to ensure  
Fulfilment; but, we trust, her upward track

Stops not at this low point, nor wants the lure

Of flowers the Virgin without fear may own,  
For by her Son's blest hand the seed was sown.

## X.

NEAR Anio's stream I spied a gentle Dove  
Perched on an olive branch, and heard her cooing

'Mid new-born blossoms that soft airs were wooing,

While all things present told of joy and love.

But restless Fancy left that olive grove  
To hail the exploratory Bird renewing

Hope for the few, who, at the world's undoing,

On the great flood were spared to live and move.

O bounteous Heaven! signs true as dove and bough

Brought to the ark are coming evermore,  
Given though we seek them not, but, while we plough

This sea of life without a visible shore,  
Do neither promise ask nor grace implore

In what alone is ours, the living Now.

## XI.

FROM THE ALBAN HILLS, LOOKING TOWARDS ROME.

FORGIVE, illustrious Country! these deep sighs,

Heaved less for thy bright plains and hills bestrown

With monuments decayed or overthrown,  
For all that tottering stands or prostrate lies,

Than for like scenes in moral vision shown,

Ruin perceived for keener sympathies;  
Faith crushed, yet proud of weeds, her gaudy crown;

Virtues laid low, and mouldering energies.

Yet why prolong this mournful strain?—  
Fallen Power,

Thy fortunes, twice exalted, might provoke

Verse to glad notes prophetic of the  
hour  
When thou, uprisen, shalt break thy  
double yoke,  
And enter, with prompt aid from the  
Most High,  
On the third stage of thy great destiny.

XII.

NEAR THE LAKE OF THRASYMENE.

WHEN here with Carthage Rome to con-  
flict came,  
An earthquake, mingling with the bat-  
tle's shock,  
Checked not its rage; unfelt the ground  
did rock,  
Sword dropped not, javelin kept its  
deadly aim.—  
Now all is sun-bright peace. Of that  
day's shame, 5  
Or glory, not a vestige seems to endure,  
Save in this Rill that took from blood the  
name<sup>1</sup>  
Which yet it bears, sweet Stream! as  
crystal pure.  
So may all trace and sign of deeds aloof  
From the true guidance of humanity, 10  
Thro' Time and Nature's influence, purify  
Their spirit; or, unless they for reproof  
Or warning serve, thus let them all, on  
ground  
That gave them being, vanish to a sound.

XIII.

NEAR THE SAME LAKE.

FOR action born, existing to be tried,  
Powers manifold we have that intervene  
To stir the heart that would too closely  
screen  
Her peace from images to pain allied.  
What wonder if at midnight, by the side  
Of Sanguinetto or broad Thrasymane, 6  
The clang of arms is heard, and phantoms  
glide,  
Unhappy ghosts in troops by moonlight  
seen;  
And singly thine, O vanquished Chief!  
whose corse,

<sup>1</sup> Sanguinetto.

Unburied, lay hid under heaps of  
slain: 10  
But who is He—the Conqueror? Would  
he force  
His way to Rome? Ah, no,—round hill  
and plain  
Wandering, he haunts, at fancy's strong  
command,  
This spot—his shadowy death-cup in his  
hand.

XIV.

THE CUCKOO AT LAVERNA.

MAY 25, 1837.

[Composed June, July, 1837.—Published: vol. of  
1842.]

LIST—'twas the Cuckoo.—O with what  
delight  
Heard I that voice! and catch it now,  
though faint,  
Far off and faint, and melting into air,  
Yet not to be mistaken. Hark again!  
Those louder cries give notice that the  
Bird, 5  
Although invisible as Echo's self,  
Is wheeling hitherward. Thanks, happy  
Creature,  
For this unthought-of greeting!  
While allured  
From vale to hill, from hill to vale led on,  
We have pursued, through various lands,  
a long 10  
And pleasant course; flower after flower  
has blown,  
Embellishing the ground that gave them  
birth  
With aspects novel to my sight; but still  
Most fair, most welcome, when they  
drank the dew  
In a sweet fellowship with kinds beloved,  
For old remembrance sake. And oft—  
where Spring 16  
Displayed her richest blossoms among files  
Of orange-trees bedecked with glowing  
fruit  
Ripe for the hand, or under a thick shade  
Of Ilex, or, if better suited to the hour, 20  
The lightsome Olive's twinkling canopy—  
Oft have I heard the Nightingale and  
Thrush

Blending as in a common English grove  
Their love-songs; but, where'er my feet  
might roam,

Whate'er assemblages of new and old, 25  
Strange and familiar, might beguile the  
way,

A gratulation from that vagrant Voice  
Was wanting;—and most happily till  
now.

For see, Laverna! mark the far-famed  
Pile,

High on the brink of that precipitous  
rock, 30

Implanted like a Fortress, as in truth  
It is, a Christian Fortress, garrisoned  
In faith and hope, and dutiful obedience,  
By a few Monks, a stern society,  
Dead to the world and scorning earth-  
born joys. 35

Nay—though the hopes that drew, the  
fears that drove,  
St. Francis, far from Man's resort, to  
abide

Among these sterile heights of Apennine,  
Bound him, nor, since he raised yon  
House, have ceased

To bind his spiritual Progeny, with rules  
Stringent as flesh can tolerate and live; 41  
His milder Genius (thanks to the good  
God

That made us) over those severe restraints  
Of mind, that dread heart-freezing disci-  
pline,

Doth sometimes here predominate, and  
works 45

By unsought means for gracious purposes;  
For earth through heaven, for heaven, by  
changeable earth,

Illustrated, and mutually endeared.

Rapt though He were above the power  
of sense,

Familiarly, yet out of the cleansed heart  
Of that once sinful Being overflowed 51  
On sun, moon, stars, the nether elements,  
And every shape of creature they sustain,  
Divine affections; and with beast and  
bird

(Stilled from afar—such marvel story  
tells— 55

By casual outbreak of his passionate  
words,

And from their own pursuits in field or  
grove

Drawn to his side by look or act of love  
Humane, and virtue of his innocent life)

He went to hold companionship so free,  
So pure, so fraught with knowledge and  
delight, 61

As to be likened in his Followers' minds  
To that which our first Parents, ere the  
fall

From their high state darkened the Earth  
with fear,

Held with all Kinds in Eden's blissful  
bowers. 65

Then question not that, 'mid the austere  
Band,

Who breathe the air he breathed, tread  
where he trod,

Some true Partakers of his loving spirit  
Do still survive, and, with those gentle  
hearts

Consorted, Others, in the power, the  
faith, 70

Of a baptized imagination, prompt  
To catch from Nature's humblest monitors  
Whate'er they bring of impulses sublime.

Thus sensitive must be the Monk,  
though pale

With fasts, with vigils worn, depressed by  
years, 75

Whom in a sunny glade I chanced to see,  
Upon a pine-tree's storm-uprooted trunk,  
Seated alone, with forehead sky-ward  
raised,

Hands clasped above the crucifix he wore  
Appended to his bosom, and lips closed 80  
By the joint pressure of his musing mood  
And habit of his vow. That ancient

Man—

Nor haply less the Brother whom I  
marked,

As we approached the Convent gate,  
aloft

Looking far forth from his aerial cell, 85  
A young Ascetic—Poet, Hero, Sage,

He might have been, Lover belike he  
was—

If they received into a conscious ear  
 The notes whose first faint greeting  
 startled me,  
 Whose sedulous iteration thrilled with  
 joy 90  
 My heart—may have been moved like me  
 to think,  
 Ah! not like me who walk in the world's  
 ways,  
 On the great Prophet, styled *the Voice*  
*of One*  
*Crying amid the wilderness*, and given,  
 Now that their snows must melt, their  
 herbs and flowers 95  
 Revive, their obstinate winter pass away,  
 That awful name to Thee, thee, simple  
 Cuckoo,  
 Wandering in solitude, and evermore  
 Foretelling and proclaiming, ere thou  
 leave 99  
 This thy last haunt beneath Italian skies  
 To carry thy glad tidings over heights  
 Still loftier, and to climes more near the  
 Pole.

Voice of the Desert, fare-thee-well;  
 sweet Bird!  
 If that substantial title please thee more,  
 Farewell!—but go thy way, no need hast  
 thou 105  
 Of a good wish sent after thee; from  
 bower  
 To bower as green, from sky to sky as  
 clear,  
 Thee gentle breezes waft—or airs that meet  
 Thy course and sport around thee softly  
 fan—  
 Till Night, descending upon hill and vale,  
 Grants to thy mission a brief term of  
 silence, 111  
 And folds thy pinions up in blest repose.

XV.

AT THE CONVENT OF CAMALDOLI.

GRIEVE for the Man who hither came  
 bereft,  
 And seeking consolation from above;  
 Nor grieve the less that skill to him was  
 left  
 To paint this picture of his lady-love:

Can she, a blessed saint, the work ap-  
 prove?  
 And O, good Brethren of the cowl, a  
 thing 5  
 So fair, to which with peril he must cling,  
 Destroy in pity, or with care remove.  
 That bloom—those eyes—can they assist  
 to bind  
 Thoughts that would stray from Heaven?  
 The dream must cease 10  
 To be; by Faith, not sight, his soul must  
 live;  
 Else will the enamoured Monk too  
 surely find  
 How wide a space can part from inward  
 peace  
 The most profound repose his cell can  
 give.

XVI.

CONTINUED.

The world forsaken, all its busy cares  
 And stirring interests shunned with de-  
 sperate flight,  
 All trust abandoned in the healing might  
 Of virtuous action; all that courage dares,  
 Labour accomplishes, or patience bears—  
 Those helps rejected, they, whose minds  
 perceive 6  
 How subtly works man's weakness, sighs  
 may heave  
 For such a One beset with cloistral snares.  
 Father of Mercy! rectify his view,  
 If with his vows this object ill agree; 10  
 Shed over it Thy grace, and thus subdue  
 Imperious passion in a heart set free:—  
 That earthly love may to herself be true,  
 Give him a soul that cleaveth unto Thee<sup>1</sup>.

XVII.

AT THE EREMITES OR UPPER CONVENT  
 OF CAMALDOLI.

WHAT aim had they, the Pair of Monks,  
 in size  
 Enormous, dragged, while side by side  
 they sate,  
 By panting steers up to this convent  
 gate?

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 307.

How, with empurpled cheeks and pam-  
pered eyes,  
Dare they confront the lean austerities 5  
Of Brethren who, here fixed, on Jesu  
wait  
In sackcloth, and God's anger deprecate  
Through all that humbles flesh and mor-  
tifies?  
Strange contrast!—verily the world of  
dreams,  
Where mingle, as for mockery combined,  
Things in their very essences at strife, 11  
Shows not a sight incongruous as the  
extremes  
That everywhere, before the thoughtful  
mind,  
Meet on the solid ground of waking life<sup>1</sup>.

## XVIII.

## AT VALLOMBROSA.

Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks  
In Vallobrosa, where Etrurian shades  
High over-arch'd embower<sup>2</sup>.

PARADISE LOST.

"VALLOMBROSA—I longed in thy shadiest  
wood  
To slumber, reclined on the moss-covered  
floor!"  
Fond wish that was granted at last, and  
the Flood,  
That lulled me asleep, bids me listen once  
more.  
Its murmur how soft! as it falls down the  
steep, 5  
Near that Cell—yon sequestered Retreat  
high in air—  
Where our Milton was wont lonely vigils  
to keep  
For converse with God, sought through  
study and prayer.  
The Monks still repeat the tradition with  
pride,  
And its truth who shall doubt? for his  
Spirit is here; 10  
In the cloud-piercing rocks doth her  
grandeur abide,

In the pines pointing heavenward her  
beauty austere;  
In the flower-besrent meadows his genius  
we trace  
Turned to humbler delights, in which  
youth might confide,  
That would yield him fit help while pre-  
figuring that Place 15  
Where, if Sin had not entered, Love never  
had died.

When with life lengthened out came a  
desolate time,  
And darkness and danger had compassed  
him round,  
With a thought he would flee to these  
haunts of his prime,  
And here once again a kind shelter be  
found. 20  
And let me believe that when nightly the  
Muse  
Did waft him to Sion, the glorified hill,  
Here also, on some favoured height, he  
would choose  
To wander, and drink inspiration at  
will.

Vallombrosa! of thee I first heard in the  
page 25  
Of that holiest of Bards, and the name for  
my mind  
Had a musical charm, which the winter  
of age  
And the changes it brings had no power  
to unbind.  
And now, ye Miltonian shades! under  
you  
I repose, nor am forced from sweet fancy  
to part, 30  
While your leaves I behold and the brooks  
they will strew,  
And the realised vision is clasped to my  
heart.

Even so, and unblamed, we rejoice as we  
may  
In Forms that must perish, frail objects  
of sense;  
Unblamed—if the Soul be intent on the  
day 35  
When the Being of Beings shall summon  
her hence.

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 907.<sup>2</sup> See for the two *first lines*, "Stanzas composed in the Simplon Pass," p. 345.

For he and he only with wisdom is blest  
Who, gathering true pleasures wherever  
they grow,  
Looks up in all places, for joy or for  
rest,  
To the Fountain whence Time and  
Eternity flow. 40

XIX.

AT FLORENCE.

UNDER the shadow of a stately Pile,  
The dome of Florence, pensive and alone,  
Nor giving heed to aught that passed the  
while,  
I stood, and gazed upon a marble stone,  
The laurelled Dante's favourite seat. A  
throne, 5  
In just esteem, it rivals; though no  
style  
Be there of decoration to beguile  
The mind, depressed by thought of great-  
ness flown.  
As a true man, who long had served the  
lyre,  
I gazed with earnestness, and dared no  
more. 10  
But in his breast the mighty Poet bore  
A Patriot's heart, warm with undying  
fire.  
Bold with the thought, in reverence I sate  
down,  
And, for a moment, filled that empty  
Throne.

XX.

BEFORE THE PICTURE OF THE BAPTIST, BY  
RAPHAEL, IN THE GALLERY AT FLORENCE.

THE Baptist might have been ordained to  
cry  
Forth from the towers of that huge Pile,  
wherein  
His Father served Jehovah; but how  
win  
Due audience, how for aught but scorn  
defy  
The obstinate pride and wanton revelry 5  
Of the Jerusalem below, her sin  
And folly, if they with united din

Drown not at once mandate and pro-  
phesy?

Therefore the Voice spake from the De-  
sert, thence

To Her, as to her opposite in peace, 10

Silence, and holiness, and innocence,

To Her and to all Lands its warning  
sent,

Crying with earnestness that might not  
cease,

"Make straight a highway for the Lord—  
repent!"

XXI.

AT FLORENCE.—FROM MICHAEL ANGELO<sup>1</sup>.

RAPT above earth by power of one fair  
face,

Hers in whose sway alone my heart de-  
lights,

I mingle with the blest on those pure  
heights

Where Man, yet mortal, rarely finds a  
place.

With Him who made the Work that Work  
accords 5

So well, that by its help and through His  
grace

I raise my thoughts, inform my deeds and  
words,

Clasping her beauty in my soul's em-  
brace.

Thus, if from two fair eyes mine cannot  
turn,

I feel how in their presence doth abide 10  
Light which to God is both the way and

guide;  
And, kindling at their lustre, if I burn,

My noble fire emits the joyful ray

That through the realms of glory shines  
for aye.

<sup>1</sup> This and the following Sonnet may possibly  
have been two of the fifteen Sonnets which in  
1805 Wordsworth essayed to translate from the  
Italian of Michael Angelo. A rough draft of No.  
xxi. is given by Mr. Dykes Campbell from a note-  
book belonging to S. T. Coleridge. See *Coleridge's  
Poetical Works*, p. 474. Mr. Campbell, unfortu-  
nately, does not give the date of the entry, or of  
the note-book.—ED.

## XXII.

AT FLORENCE.—FROM MICHAEL ANGELO.

ETERNAL Lord! eased of a cumbrous load,  
 And loosened from the world, I turn to  
 Thee;  
 Shun, like a shattered bark, the storm,  
 and flee  
 To Thy protection for a safe abode.  
 The crown of thorns, hands pierced upon  
 the tree, 5  
 The meek, benign, and lacerated face,  
 To a sincere repentance promise grace,  
 To the sad soul give hope of pardon free.  
 With justice mark not Thou, O Light  
 divine,  
 My fault, nor hear it with Thy sacred  
 ear; 10  
 Neither put forth that way Thy arm  
 severe;  
 Wash with Thy blood my sins; thereto  
 incline  
 More readily the more my years require  
 Help, and forgiveness speedy and entire.

## XXIII.

AMONG THE RUINS OF A CONVENT  
IN THE APENNINES.

YE Trees! whose slender roots entwine  
 Altars that piety neglects;  
 Whose infant arms enclasp the shrine  
 Which no devotion now respects;  
 If not a straggler from the herd 5  
 Here ruminate, nor shrouded bird,  
 Chanting her low-voiced hymn, take pride  
 In aught that ye would grace or hide—  
 How sadly is your love misplaced,  
 Fair Trees, your bounty run to waste! 10  
 Ye, too, wild Flowers! that no one heeds,  
 And ye—full often spurned as weeds—  
 In beauty clothed, or breathing sweetness  
 From fractured arch and mouldering  
 wall—  
 Do but more touchingly recall 15  
 Man's headstrong violence and Time's  
 fleetness,  
 Making the precincts ye adorn  
 Appear to sight still more forlorn.

## XXIV.

IN LOMBARDY.

SEE, where his difficult way that Old Man  
 wins  
 Bent by a load of Mulberry leaves!—most  
 hard  
 Appears *his* lot, to the small Worm's  
 compared,  
 For whom his toil with early day begins.  
 Acknowledging no task-master, at will 5  
 (As if her labour and her ease were twins)  
*She* seems to work, at pleasure to lie  
 still;—  
 And softly sleeps within the thread she  
 spins.  
 So fare they—the Man serving as her  
 Slave.  
 Ere long their fates do each to each  
 conform: 10  
 Both pass into new being,—but the Worm,  
 Transfigured, sinks into a hopeless grave;  
*His* volent Spirit will, he trusts, ascend  
 To bliss unbounded, glory without end.

## XXV.

AFTER LEAVING ITALY.

FAIR Land! Thee all men greet with joy;  
 how few,  
 Whose souls take pride in freedom, virtue,  
 fame,  
 Part from thee without pity dyed in  
 shame:  
 I could not—while from Venice we with-  
 drew,  
 Led on till an Alpine strait confined our  
 view 5  
 Within its depths, and to the shore we came  
 Of Lago Morto, dreary sight and name,  
 Which o'er sad thoughts a sadder colour  
 ing threw.  
 Italia! on the surface of thy spirit,  
 (Too aptly emblem'd by that torpid lake)  
 Shall a few partial breezes only creep?— 11  
 Be its depths quickened; what thou dost  
 inherit  
 Of the world's hopes, dare to fulfil; awake,  
 Mother of Heroes, from thy death-like  
 sleep!

XXVI.

CONTINUED.

As indignation mastered grief, my tongue  
Spake bitter words; words that did ill  
agree

With those rich stores of Nature's imagery,  
And divine Art, that fast to memory  
clung—

Thy gifts, magnificent Region, ever young  
In the sun's eye, and in his sister's  
sight 6

How beautiful! how worthy to be sung  
In strains of rapture, or subdued delight!  
I feign not; witness that unwelcome shock  
That followed the first sound of German  
speech, 10

Caught the far-winding barrier Alps  
among.

In that announcement, greeting seemed  
to mock

Parting; the casual word had power to  
reach

My heart, and filled that heart with con-  
flict strong.

XXVII.

COMPOSED AT RYDAL ON MAY MORNING,  
1838.

[Composed May 1, 1838.—Published: Sonnet-vol.  
of 1838; vol. of 1842.]

IF with old love of you, dear Hills! I  
share

New love of many a rival image brought  
From far, forgive the wanderings of my  
thought:

Nor art thou wronged, sweet May! when  
I compare

Thy present birth-morn with thy last, so  
fair, 5

So rich to me in favours. For my lot  
Then was, within the famed Egerian Grot  
To sit and muse, fanned by its dewy air  
Mingling with thy soft breath! That  
morning too,

Warblers I heard their joy unbosoming 10  
Amid the sunny, shadowy, Colosseum;  
Heard them, unchecked by aught of sad-  
dening hue,

For victories there won by flower-crowned  
Spring,  
Chant in full choir their innocent Te  
Deum.

XXVIII.

THE PILLAR OF TRAJAN.

[Composed 1825.—Published 1827<sup>1</sup>.]

WHERE towers are crushed, and unfor-  
bidden weeds

O'er mutilated arches shed their seeds;  
And temples, doomed to milder change,  
unfold

A new magnificence that vies with old;  
Firm in its pristine majesty hath stood 5  
A votive Column, spared by fire and  
flood:—

And, though the passions of man's fretful  
race

Have never ceased to eddy round its base,  
Not injured more by touch of meddling  
hands

Than a lone obelisk, 'mid Nubian sands, 10  
Or aught in Syrian deserts left to save  
From death the memory of the good and  
brave.

Historic figures round the shaft embost  
Ascend, with lineaments in air not lost:  
Still as he turns, the charmed spectator  
sees 15

Group winding after group with dream-  
like ease;

Triumphs in sun-bright gratitude dis-  
played,

Or softly stealing into modest shade.

—So, pleased with purple clusters to en-  
twine

Some lofty elm-tree, mounts the daring  
vine; 20

The woodbine so, with spiral grace, and  
breathes

Wide-spreading odours from her flowery  
wreaths.

<sup>1</sup> Included among *Poems of Sentiment and Reflection* in edd. 1827-43. First placed in this Series in ed. 1845. The preceding Sonnet (xxvii.) was included amongst the *Miscellaneous Sonnets* in the volume of 1842, and first found its present place in ed. 1845.—Ed.

Borne by the Muse from rills in shep-  
herds' ears  
Murmuring but one smooth story for all  
years,  
I gladly commune with the mind and  
heart 25  
Of him who thus survives by classic art,  
His actions witness, venerate his mien,  
And study Trajan as by Pliny seen;  
Behold how fought the Chief whose con-  
quering sword  
Stretched far as earth might own a single  
lord; 30  
In the delight of moral prudence schooled,  
How feelingly at home the Sovereign  
ruled;  
Best of the good—in pagan faith allied  
To more than Man, by virtue deified.

Memorial Pillar! 'mid the wrecks of  
Time 35  
Preserve thy charge with confidence  
sublime—  
The exultations, pomps, and cares of  
Rome,  
Whence half the breathing world received  
its doom;  
Things that recoil from language; that,  
if shown 39  
By apter pencil, from the light had flown.  
A Pontiff, Trajan *here* the Gods implores,  
*There* greets an Embassy from Indian  
shores;  
Lo! he harangues his cohorts—*there* the  
storm  
Of battle meets him in authentic form!  
Unharnessed, naked, troops of Moorish  
horse 45  
Sweep to the charge; more high, the  
Dacian force,  
To hoof and finger mailed;—yet, high or  
low,

None bleed, and none lie prostrate but  
the foe;  
In every Roman, through all turns of  
fate,  
Is Roman dignity inviolate; 50  
Spirit in him pre-eminent, who guides,  
Supports, adorns, and over all presides;  
Distinguished only by inherent state  
From honoured Instruments that round  
him wait;  
Rise as he may, his grandeur scorns the  
test 55  
Of outward symbol, nor will deign to rest  
On aught by which another is deprest.  
—Alas! that One thus disciplined could  
toil  
To enslave whole nations on their native  
soil;  
So emulous of Macedonian fame, 60  
That, when his age was measured with his  
aim,  
He drooped, 'mid else unclouded victories,  
And turned his eagles back with deep-  
drawn sighs:  
O weakness of the Great! O folly of the  
Wise!

Where now the haughty Empire that  
was spread 65  
With such fond hope? her very speech is  
dead;  
Yet glorious Art the power of Time defies,  
And Trajan still, through various enter-  
prise,  
Mounts, in this fine illusion, toward the  
skies:  
Still are we present with the imperial  
Chief, 70  
Nor cease to gaze upon the bold Relief  
Till Rome, to silent marble unconfined,  
Becomes with all her years a vision of the  
Mind.

# The Egyptian Maid;

OR,

## The Romance of the Water Lily.

[Composed 1830.—Published 1835.]

For the names and persons in the following poem see the "History of the renowned Prince Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table;" for the rest the Author is answerable; only it may be proper to add that the Lotus, with the bust of the Goddess appearing to rise out of the full-blown flower, was suggested by the beautiful work of ancient art, once included among the Townley Marbles, and now in the British Museum.

WHILE Merlin paced the Cornish sands,  
Forth-looking toward the rocks of Scilly,  
The pleased Enchanter was aware  
Of a bright Ship that seemed to hang in  
air,

Yet was she work of mortal hands, 5  
And took from men her name—THE  
WATER LILY.

Soft was the wind, that landward blew;  
And, as the Moon, o'er some dark hill  
ascendant,  
Grows from a little edge of light  
To a full orb, this Pinnacle bright 10  
Became, as nearer to the coast she drew,  
More glorious, with spread sail and stream-  
ing pendant.

Upon this winged Shape so fair  
Sage Merlin gazed with admiration:  
Her lineaments, thought he, surpass 15  
Aught that was ever shown in magic  
glass;

Was ever built with patient care;  
Or, at a touch, produced by happiest  
transformation.

Now, though a Mechanist, whose skill  
Shames the degenerate grasp of modern  
science, 20  
Grave Merlin (and belike the more

For practising occult and perilous lore)  
Was subject to a freakish will  
That sapped good thoughts, or scared  
them with defiance.

Provoked to envious spleen, he cast 25  
An altered look upon the advancing  
Stranger  
Whom he had hailed with joy, and  
cried,  
"My Art shall help to tame her pride—"  
Anon the breeze became a blast,  
And the waves rose, and sky portended  
danger. 30

With thrilling word, and potent sign  
Traced on the beach, his work the Sor-  
cerer urges;  
The clouds in blacker clouds are lost,  
Like spiteful Fiends that vanish, crossed  
By Fiends of aspect more malign; 35  
And the winds roused the Deep with  
fiercer scourges.

But worthy of the name she bore  
Was this Sea-flower, this buoyant Galley;  
Supreme in loveliness and grace  
Of motion, whether in the embrace 40  
Of trusty anchorage, or scudding o'er  
The main flood roughened into hill and  
valley.

Behold, how wantonly she laves  
 Her sides, the Wizard's craft confound-  
 ing;  
 Like something out of Ocean sprung 45  
 To be for ever fresh and young,  
 Breasts the sea-flashes, and huge waves  
 Top-gallant high, rebounding and re-  
 bounding!

But Ocean under magic heaves,  
 And cannot spare the Thing he  
 cherished: 50  
 Ah! what avails that she was fair,  
 Luminous, blithe, and debonair?  
 The storm has stripped her of her leaves;  
 The Lily floats no longer!—She hath  
 perished.

Grieve for her, she deserves no less; 55  
 So like, yet so unlike, a living Creature!  
 No heart had she, no busy brain;  
 Though loved, she could not love again;  
 Though pitied, *feel* her own distress;  
 Nor aught that troubles us, the fools of  
 Nature. 60

Yet is there cause for gushing tears;  
 So richly was this Galley laden,  
 A fairer than herself she bore,  
 And, in her struggles, cast ashore;  
 A lovely One, who nothing hears 65  
 Of wind or wave—a meek and guileless  
 Maiden.

Into a cave had Merlin fled  
 From mischief, caused by spells himself  
 had muttered;  
 And while, repentant all too late,  
 In moody posture there he sate, 70  
 He heard a voice, and saw, with half-  
 raised head,  
 A Visitant by whom these words were  
 uttered:—

“On Christian service this frail Bark  
 Sailed” (hear me, Merlin!) “under high  
 protection,  
 Though on her prow a sign of heathen  
 power 75  
 Was carved—a Goddess with a Lily  
 flower,  
 The old Egyptian's emblematic mark  
 Of joy immortal and of pure affection.

“Her course was for the British strand;  
 Her freight, it was a Damsel peer-  
 less;  
 God reigns above, and Spirits strong 81  
 May gather to avenge this wrong  
 Done to the Princess, and her Land  
 Which she in duty left, sad but not cheer-  
 less.

“And to Caerleon's loftiest tower 85  
 Soon will the Knights of Arthur's  
 Table  
 A cry of lamentation send;  
 And all will weep who there attend,  
 To grace that Stranger's bridal hour, 89  
 For whom the sea was made unnavi-  
 gable.

“Shame! should a Child of royal line  
 Die through the blindness of thy  
 malice?”  
 Thus to the Necromancer spake  
 Nina, the Lady of the Lake,  
 A gentle Sorceress, and benign, 95  
 Who ne'er embittered any good man's  
 chalice.

“What boots,” continued she, “to  
 mourn?  
 To expiate thy sin endeavour:  
 From the bleak isle where she is laid, 99  
 Fetched by our art, the Egyptian Maid  
 May yet to Arthur's court be borne  
 Cold as she is, ere life be fled for ever.

“My pearly Boat, a shining Light,  
 That brought me down that sunless  
 river,  
 Will bear me on from wave to wave, 105  
 And back with her to this sea-cave;—  
 Then Merlin! for a rapid flight  
 Through air, to thee my Charge will I  
 deliver.

“The very swiftest of thy cars 109  
 Must, when my part is done, be ready;  
 Meanwhile, for further guidance, look  
 Into thy own prophetic book;  
 And, if that fail, consult the Stars  
 To learn thy course; farewell! be prompt  
 and steady.”

This scarcely spoken, she again 115  
Was seated in her gleaming shallop,  
That, o'er the yet-distempered Deep,  
Pursued its way with bird-like sweep,  
Or like a steed, without a rein,  
Urged o'er the wilderness in sportive  
gallop. 120

Soon did the gentle Nina reach  
That Isle without a house or haven;  
Landing, she found not what she sought,  
Nor saw of wreck or ruin aught 124  
But a carved Lotus cast upon the beach  
By the fierce waves, a flower in marble  
graven.

Sad relique, but how fair the while!  
For gently each from each retreating  
With backward curve, the leaves re-  
vealed  
The bosom half, and half concealed, 130  
Of a Divinity, that seemed to smile  
On Nina, as she passed, with hopeful  
greeting.

No quest was hers of vague desire,  
Of tortured hope and purpose shaken!  
Following the margin of a bay, 135  
She spied the lonely Cast-away,  
Unmarred, unstripped of her attire,  
But with closed eyes,—of breath and  
bloom forsaken.

Then Nina, stooping down, embraced,  
With tenderness and mild emotion, 140  
The Damsel, in that trance embound;  
And, while she raised her from the  
ground,  
And in the pearly shallop placed,  
Sleep fell upon the air, and stilled the  
ocean.

The turmoil hushed, celestial springs 145  
Of music opened, and there came a  
blending  
Of fragrance, underived from earth,  
With gleams that owed not to the sun  
their birth,  
And that soft rustling of invisible wings  
Which Angels make, on works of love  
descending. 150

And Nina heard a sweeter voice  
Than if the Goddess of the flower had  
spoken:

"Thou hast achieved, fair Dame! what  
none

Less pure in spirit could have done;  
Go, in thy enterprise rejoice! 155  
Air, earth, sea, sky, and heaven, success  
betoken."

So cheered, she left that Island bleak,  
A bare rock of the Scilly cluster;  
And, as they traversed the smooth brine,  
The self-illuminated Brigantine 160  
Shed, on the Slumberer's cold wan cheek  
And pallid brow, a melancholy lustre.

Fleet was their course, and when they  
came

To the dim cavern, whence the river  
Issued into the salt-sea flood, 165  
Merlin, as fixed in thought he stood,  
Was thus accosted by the Dame:

"Behold to thee my Charge I now deliver!

"But where attends thy chariot—  
where?"— 169

Quoth Merlin, "Even as I was bidden,  
So have I done; as trusty as thy barge  
My vehicle shall prove—O precious  
Charge!

If this be sleep, how soft! if death, how  
fair!

Much have my books disclosed, but the  
end is hidden."

He spake; and gliding into view 175  
Forth from the grotto's dimmest  
chamber

Came two mute Swans, whose plumes  
of dusky white

Changed, as the pair approached the light,  
Drawing an ebon car, their hue  
(Like clouds of sunset) into lucid amber.

Once more did gentle Nina lift 181  
The Princess, passive to all changes:

The car received her:—then up-went  
Into the ethereal element

The Birds with progress smooth and  
swift 185

As thought, when through bright regions  
memory ranges.

Sage Merlin, at the Slumberer's side,  
Instructs the Swans their way to measure;  
And soon Caerleon's towers appeared,  
And notes of minstrelsy were heard 190  
From rich pavilions spreading wide,  
For some high day of long-expected pleasure.

Awe-stricken stood both Knights and Dames  
Ere on firm ground the car alighted;  
Eftsoons astonishment was past, 195  
For in that face they saw the last  
Last lingering look of clay, that tames  
All pride; by which all happiness is blighted.

Said Merlin: "Mighty King, fair Lords,  
Away with feast and tilt and tourney! 200  
Ye saw, throughout this royal House,  
Ye heard, a rocking marvellous  
Of turrets, and a clash of swords  
Self-shaken, as I closed my airy journey.

Lo! by a destiny well known 205  
To mortals, joy is turned to sorrow;  
This is the wished-for Bride, the Maid  
Of Egypt, from a rock conveyed  
Where she by shipwreck had been thrown;  
Ill sight! but grief may vanish ere the  
morrow." 210

"Though vast thy power, thy words are weak,"  
Exclaimed the King, "a mockery hateful;  
Dutiful Child, her lot how hard!  
Is this her piety's reward?  
Those watery locks, that bloodless cheek!  
O winds without remorse! O shore ungrateful! 216

"Rich robes are fretted by the moth;  
Towers, temples, fall by stroke of thunder;  
Will that, or deeper thoughts, abate  
A Father's sorrow for her fate? 220  
He will repent him of his troth;  
His brain will burn, his stout heart split  
asunder.

"Alas! and I have caused this woe;  
For, when my prowess from invading  
Neighbours 224  
Had freed his Realm, he plighted word  
That he would turn to Christ our Lord,  
And his dear Daughter on a Knight  
bestow  
Whom I should choose for love and match-  
less labours.

"Her birth was heathen; but a fence  
Of holy Angels round her hovered: 230  
A Lady added to my court  
So fair, of such divine report  
And worship, seemed a recompense  
For fifty kingdoms by my sword re-  
covered.

"Ask not for whom, O Champions true!  
She was reserved by me her life's be-  
trayer; 236  
She who was meant to be a bride  
Is now a corpse: then put aside  
Vain thoughts, and speed ye, with  
observance due  
Of Christian rites, in Christian ground to  
lay her." 240

"The tomb," said Merlin, "may not close  
Upon her yet, earth hide her beauty;  
Not froward to thy sovereign will  
Esteem me, Liege! if I, whose skill  
Wafted her hither, interpose 245  
To check this pious haste of erring duty.

"My books command me to lay bare  
The secret thou art bent on keeping:  
Here must a high attest be given,  
What Bridegroom was for her ordained  
by Heaven: 250  
And in my glass significant there are  
Of things that may to gladness turn this  
weeping.

"For this, approaching, One by One,  
Thy Knights must touch the cold hand  
of the Virgin;  
So, for the favoured One, the Flower  
may bloom 255  
Once more: but, if unchangeable her  
doom,  
If life departed be for ever gone,  
Some blest assurance, from this cloud  
emerging,

"May teach him to bewail his loss;  
 Not with a grief that, like a vapour,  
     rises 260  
 And melts; but grief devout that shall  
     endure,  
 And a perpetual growth secure  
 Of purposes which no false thought  
     shall cross,  
 A harvest of high hopes and noble enter-  
     prises."

"So be it," said the King;—"anon, 265  
 Here, where the Princess lies, begin the  
     trial;  
 Knights each in order as ye stand  
 Step forth."—To touch the pallid hand  
 Sir Agravaine advanced; no sign he  
     won  
 From Heaven or earth;—Sir Kaye had  
     like denial. 270

Abashed, Sir Dinas turned away;  
 Even for Sir Percival was no disclo-  
     sure;  
 Though he, devoutest of all Champions,  
     ere  
 He reached that ebon car, the bier  
 Whereon diffused like snow the Damsel  
     lay, 275  
 Full thrice had crossed himself in meek  
     composure.

Imagine (but ye Saints! who can?)  
 How in still air the balance trembled—  
 The wishes, peradventure the despites  
 That overcame some not ungenerous  
     Knights; 280  
 And all the thoughts that lengthened  
     out a span  
 Of time to Lords and Ladies thus as-  
     sembled.

What patient confidence was here!  
 And there how many bosoms panted!  
 While drawing toward the car Sir  
     Gawaine, mailed 285  
 For tournament, his beaver veiled,  
 And softly touched; but, to his princely  
     cheer  
 And high expectancy, no sign was  
     granted.

Next, disencumbered of his harp,  
 Sir Tristram, dear to thousands as a  
     brother, 290  
 Came to the proof, nor grieved that  
     there ensued  
 No change;—the fair Izonda he had  
     wooded  
 With love too true, a love with pangs  
     too sharp,  
 From hope too distant, not to dread  
     another.

Not so Sir Launcelot;—from Heaven's  
     grace 295  
 A sign he craved, tired slave of vain  
     contrition;  
 The royal Guinever looked passing glad  
 When his touch failed.—Next came  
     Sir Galahad;  
 He paused, and stood entranced by that  
     still face  
 Whose features he had seen in noontide  
     vision. 300

For late, as near a murmuring stream  
 He rested 'mid an arbour green and  
     shady,  
 Nina, the good Enchantress, shed  
 A light around his mossy bed;  
 And, at her call, a waking dream 305  
 Prefigured to his sense the Egyptian Lady.

Now, while his bright-haired front he  
     bowed,  
 And stood, far-kenned by mantle furred  
     with ermine,  
 As o'er the insensate Body hung  
 The enrapt, the beautiful, the young,  
 Belief sank deep into the crowd 311  
 That he the solemn issue would deter-  
     mine.

Nor deem it strange; the Youth had  
     worn  
 That very mantle on a day of glory,  
 The day when he achieved that match-  
     less feat, 315  
 The marvel of the PERILOUS SEAT,  
 Which whosoe'er approached of strength  
     was shorn,  
 Though King or Knight the most re-  
     nowned in story.

He touched with hesitating hand—  
 And lo ! those Birds, far-famed through  
     Love's dominions, 320  
 The Swans, in triumph clap their  
     wings ;  
 And their necks play, involved in rings,  
 Like sinless snakes in Eden's happy  
     land ;—  
 " Mine is she," cried the Knight ;—again  
     they clapped their pinions.  
  
 " Mine was she—mineshe is, though dead,  
 And to her name my soul shall cleave  
     in sorrow ;" 326  
 Whereat a tender twilight streak  
 Of colour dawned upon the Damsel's  
     cheek ;  
 And her lips, quickening with uncertain  
     red,  
 Seemed from each other a faint warmth  
     to borrow. 330  
  
 Deep was the awe, the rapture high,  
 Of love emboldened, hope with dread  
     entwining,  
 When, to the mouth, relenting Death  
 Allowed a soft and flower-like breath,  
 Precursor to a timid sigh, 335  
 To lifted eyelids, and a doubtful shining.  
  
 In silence did King Arthur gaze  
 Upon the signs that pass away or tarry ;  
 In silence watched the gentle strife  
 Of Nature leading back to life ; 340  
 Then eased his soul at length by praise  
 Of God, and Heaven's pure Queen—the  
     blissful Mary.  
  
 Then said he, " Take her to thy heart,  
 Sir Galahad ! a treasure, that God  
     giveth,  
 Bound by indissoluble ties to thee 345  
 Through mortal change and immor-  
     tality ;  
 Be happy and unenvied, thou who art  
 A goodly Knight that hath no peer that  
     liveth !"

Not long the Nuptials were delayed ;  
 And sage tradition still rehearses 350  
 The pomp, the glory of that hour  
 When toward the altar from her bower  
 King Arthur led the Egyptian Maid,  
 And Angels carolled these far-echoed  
     verses ;—  
  
 Who shrinks not from alliance 355  
 Of evil with good Powers  
 To God proclaims defiance,  
 And mocks whom he adores.  
  
 A Ship to Christ devoted  
 From the Land of Nile did go ; 360  
 Alas ! the bright Ship floated,  
 An Idol at her prow.  
  
 By magic domination,  
 The Heaven-permitted vent  
 Of purblind mortal passion, 365  
 Was wrought her punishment.  
  
 The Flower, the Form within it,  
 What served they in her need ?  
 Her port she could not win it,  
 Nor from mishap be freed. 370  
  
 The tempest overcame her,  
 And she was seen no more ;  
 But gently, gently blame her—  
 She cast a Pearl ashore.  
  
 The Maid to Jesu hearkened, 375  
 And kept to Him her faith,  
 Till sense in death was darkened,  
 Or sleep akin to death.  
  
 But Angels round her pillow  
 Kept watch, a viewless band ; 380  
 And, billow favouring billow,  
 She reached the destined strand.  
  
 Blest Pair ! whate'er befall you,  
 Your faith in Him approve  
 Who from frail earth can call you 385  
 To bowers of endless love !

# THE RIVER DUDDON.

## A SERIES OF SONNETS<sup>1</sup>.

[Composed between 1806-1820.—Published 1820.]

The River Duddon rises upon Wrynose Fell, on the confines of Westmoreland, Cumberland, and Lancashire; and, having served as a boundary to the two last Counties for the space of about twenty-five miles, enters the Irish Sea, between the Isle of Walney and the Lordship of Millum.

### TO THE REV. DR. WORDSWORTH

(WITH THE SONNETS TO THE RIVER DUDDON,  
AND OTHER POEMS IN THIS COLLECTION,  
1820).

[Composed Christmastide, 1819.—Published 1820.]

The Minstrels played their Christmas tune  
To-night beneath my cottage-eaves;  
While, smitten by a lofty moon,  
The encircling laurels, thick with leaves,  
Gave back a rich and dazzling sheen, 5  
That overpowered their natural green.

Through hill and valley every breeze  
Had sunk to rest with folded wings:  
Keen was the air, but could not freeze,  
Nor check the music of the strings; 10  
So stout and hardy were the band  
That scraped the chords with strenuous hand!

And who but listened?—till was paid  
Respect to every Inmate's claim:  
The greeting given, the music played, 15  
In honour of each household name,  
Duly pronounced with lusty call,  
And "Merry Christmas" wished to all!

O Brother! I revere the choice  
That took thee from thy native hills;  
And it is given thee to rejoice:  
Though public care full often tills 20  
(Heaven only witness of the toil)  
A barren and ungrateful soil.

Yet, would that Thou, with me and mine, 25  
Hadst heard this never-falling rite;  
And seen on other faces shine  
A true revival of the light  
Which Nature and these rustic Powers,  
In simple childhood, spread through ours! 30

For pleasure hath not ceased to wait  
On these expected annual rounds;  
Whether the rich man's sumptuous gate  
Call forth the unelaborate sounds,  
Or they are offered at the door 35  
That guards the lowliest of the poor.

How touching, when, at midnight, sweep  
Snow-muffled winds, and all is dark,  
To hear—and sink again to sleep!  
Or, at an earlier call, to mark, 40  
By blazing fire, the still suspense  
Of self-complacent innocence;

The mutual nod,—the grave disguise  
Of hearts with gladness brimming o'er;  
And some unbidden tears that rise 45  
For names once heard, and heard no more;  
Tears brightened by the serenade  
For infant in the cradle laid.

Ah! not for emerald fields alone,  
With ambient streams more pure and bright 50  
Than fabled Cytherea's zone  
Glittering before the Thunderer's sight,  
Is to my heart of hearts endeared  
The ground where we were born and reared!

<sup>1</sup> These Sonnets (No. xxvii. excepted) appeared early in 1820, in a volume entitled *The River Duddon, A Series of Sonnets: Vaudracour and Julia: and other Poems. To which is annexed A Topographical Description of the Country of the Lakes, in the North of England.* They were written at various intervals between 1806 and 1820. Sonnet No. xiv. (*O Mountain Stream!*) was written before April, 1807, when it first appeared amongst the *Miscellaneous Sonnets of Poems in Two Volumes*; and Sonnet No. xxvii. (*Fallen, and diffused*) was published in 1819, along with *The Waggoner*; included, in the collective (4 vol.) ed. of 1820, amongst the *Miscellaneous Sonnets*; and, in ed. 1827, transferred to its present place in this Series.—En.

Hail, ancient Manners! sure defence, 55  
 Where they survive, of wholesome laws;  
 Remnants of love whose modest sense  
 Thus into narrow room withdraws;  
 Hail, Usages of pristine mould,  
 And ye that guard them, Mountains old! 60

Bear with me, Brother! quench the thought  
 That slights this passion, or condemns;  
 If thee fond Fancy ever brought  
 From the proud margin of the Thames,  
 And Lambeth's venerable towers, 65  
 To humbler streams, and greener bowers.

Yes, they can make, who fail to find,  
 Short leisure even in busiest days;  
 Moments, to cast a look behind,  
 And profit by those kindly rays 70  
 That through the clouds do sometimes steal,  
 And all the far-off past reveal.

Hence, while the imperial City's din  
 Beats frequent on thy satiate ear,  
 A pleased attention I may win 75  
 To agitations less severe,  
 That neither overwhelm nor cloy,  
 But fill the hollow vale with joy!

## I.

NOT envying Latian shades—if yet they  
 throw  
 A grateful coolness round that crystal  
 Spring,  
 Bandusia, prattling as when long ago  
 The Sabine Bard was moved her praise to  
 sing;  
 Careless of flowers that in perennial blow  
 Round the moist marge of Persian foun- 6  
 tains cling;  
 Heedless of Alpine torrents thundering  
 Through ice-built arches radiant as hea-  
 ven's bow;  
 I seek the birthplace of a native Stream.—  
 All hail, ye mountains! hail, thou morn-  
 ing light! 10  
 Better to breathe at large on this clear  
 height  
 Than toil in needless sleep from dream to  
 dream:  
 Pure flow the verse, pure, vigorous, free,  
 and bright,  
 For Duddon, long-loved Duddon, is my  
 theme!

## II.

CHILD of the clouds! remote from every  
 taint  
 Of sordid industry thy lot is cast;  
 Thine are the honours of the lofty waste;  
 Not seldom, when with heat the valleys  
 faint,  
 Thy handmaid Frost with spangled tissue  
 quaint 5  
 Thy cradle decks;—to chant thy birth,  
 thou hast  
 No meaner Poet than the whistling Blast,  
 And Desolation is thy Patron-saint!  
 She guards thee, ruthless Power! who  
 would not spare  
 Those mighty forests, once the bison's  
 screen, 10  
 Where stalked the huge deer to his shaggy  
 lair<sup>1</sup>  
 Through paths and alleys roofed with  
 darkest green;  
 Thousands of years before the silent air  
 Was pierced by whizzing shaft of hunter  
 keen!

## III.

How shall I paint thee?—Be this naked  
 stone  
 My seat, while I give way to such intent;  
 Pleased could my verse, a speaking monu-  
 ment,  
 Make to the eyes of men thy features  
 known. 4  
 But as of all those tripping lambs not one  
 Outruns his fellows, so hath Nature lent  
 To thy beginning nought that doth pre-  
 sent  
 Peculiar ground for hope to build upon.  
 To dignify the spot that gives thee birth  
 No sign of hoar Antiquity's Esteem 10  
 Appears, and none of modern Fortune's  
 care;  
 Yet thou thyself hast round thee shed  
 a gleam  
 Of brilliant moss, instinct with freshness  
 rare;  
 Prompt offering to thy Foster-mother,  
 Earth!

<sup>1</sup> The deer alluded to is the Leigh, a gigantic species long since extinct.

## IV.

TAKE, cradled Nursling of the mountain,  
 take  
 This parting glance, no negligent adieu !  
 A Protean change seems wrought while I  
 pursue  
 The curves, a loosely-scattered chain doth  
 make ;  
 Or rather thou appear'st a glistening snake,  
 Silent, and to the gazer's eye untrue,      6  
 Thridding with sinuous lapse the rushes,  
 through  
 Dwarf willows gliding, and by ferny brake.  
 Starts from a dizzy steep the undaunted  
 Rill  
 Robed instantly in garb of snow-white  
 foam ;      10  
 And laughing dares the Adventurer, who  
 hath clomb  
 So high, a rival purpose to fulfil ;  
 Else let the dastard backward wend, and  
 roam,  
 Seeking less bold achievement, where he  
 will !

## V.

SOLE listener, Duddon ! to the breeze that  
 played  
 With thy clear voice, I caught the fitful  
 sound  
 Wafted o'er sullen moss and craggy  
 mound—  
 Unfruitful solitudes, that seemed to up-  
 braid  
 The sun in heaven !—but now, to form a  
 shade      5  
 For Thee, green alders have together wound  
 Their foliage ; ashes flung their arms  
 around ;  
 And birch-trees risen in silver colonnade.  
 And thou hast also tempted here to rise,  
 'Mid sheltering pines, this Cottage rude  
 and grey ;      10  
 Whose ruddy children, by the mother's  
 eyes  
 Carelessly watched, sport through the  
 summer day,  
 Thy pleased associates :—light as endless  
 May  
 On infant bosoms lonely Nature lies.

## VI.

## FLOWERS.

ERE yet our course was graced with social  
 trees  
 It lacked not old remains of hawthorn  
 bowers,  
 Where small birds warbled to their para-  
 mours ;  
 And, earlier still, was heard the hum of  
 bees ;  
 I saw them ply their harmless robberies,  
 And caught the fragrance which the  
 sundry flowers,      6  
 Fed by the stream with soft perpetual  
 showers,  
 Plenteously yielded to the vagrant breeze.  
 There bloomed the strawberry of the  
 wilderness ;  
 The trembling eyebright showed her  
 sapphire blue,      10  
 The thyme her purple, like the blush of  
 Even ;  
 And if the breath of some to no caress  
 Invited, forth they peeped so fair to view,  
 All kinds alike seemed favourites of  
 Heaven.

## VII.

"CHANGE me, some God, into that breath-  
 ing rose !"  
 The love-sick Stripling fancifully sighs,  
 The envied flower beholding, as it lies  
 On Laura's breast, in exquisite repose ;  
 Or he would pass into her bird, that  
 throws      5  
 The darts of song from out its wiry cage ;  
 Enraptured,—could he for himself en-  
 gage  
 The thousandth part of what the Nymph  
 bestows ;  
 And what the little careless innocent  
 Ungraciously receives. Too daring choice !  
 There are whose calmer mind it would  
 content      11  
 To be an uncultured floweret of the glen,  
 Fearless of plough and scythe ; or dark-  
 ling wren  
 That tunes on Duddon's banks her slender  
 voice.

## VIII.

WHAT aspect bore the Man who roved or fled,  
 First of his tribe, to this dark dell—who first  
 In this pellucid Current slaked his thirst?  
 What hopes came with him? what designs were spread  
 Along his path? His unprotected bed 5  
 What dreams encompassed? Was the intruder nursed  
 In hideous usages, and rights accursed,  
 That thinned the living and disturbed the dead?  
 No voice replies;—both air and earth are mute;  
 And Thou, blue Streamlet, murmuring yield'st no more 10  
 Than a soft record, that, whatever fruit  
 Of ignorance thou might'st witness heretofore,  
 Thy function was to heal and to restore,  
 To soothe and cleanse, not madden and pollute!

## IX.

## THE STEPPING-STONES.

THE struggling Rill insensibly is grown  
 Into a Brook of loud and stately march,  
 Crossed ever and anon by plank or arch;  
 And, for like use, lo! what might seem a zone  
 Chosen for ornament—stone matched with stone 5  
 In studied symmetry, with interspace  
 For the clear waters to pursue their race  
 Without restraint. How swiftly have they flown,  
 Succeeding—still succeeding! Here the Child  
 Puts, when the high-swoln Flood runs fierce and wild, 10  
 His budding courage to the proof; and here  
 Declining Manhood learns to note the sly  
 And sure encroachments of infirmity,  
 Thinking how fast time runs, life's end how near!

## X.

## THE SAME SUBJECT.

NOT so that Pair whose youthful spirits dance  
 With prompt emotion, urging them to pass;  
 A sweet confusion checks the Shepherd-lass;  
 Blushing she eyes the dizzy flood askance;  
 To stop ashamed—too timid to advance; 5  
 She ventures once again—another pause!  
 His outstretched hand He tauntingly withdraws—  
 She sues for help with piteous utterance!  
 Chidden she chides again; the thrilling touch  
 Both feel, when he renews the wished-for aid: 10  
 Ah! if their fluttering hearts should stir too much,  
 Should beat too strongly, both may be betrayed.  
 The frolic Loves, who, from yon high rock, see  
 The struggle, clap their wings for victory!

## XI.

## THE FAERY CHASM.

NO fiction was it of the antique age:  
 A sky-blue stone, within this sunless cleft,  
 Is of the very footmarks unbereft  
 Which tiny Elves impressed;—on that smooth stage  
 Dancing with all their brilliant equipage 5  
 In secret revels—haply after theft  
 Of some sweet Babe—Flower stolen, and coarse Weed left  
 For the distracted Mother to assuage  
 Her grief with, as she might!—But, where, oh! where  
 Is traceable a vestige of the notes 10  
 That ruled those dances wild in character?—  
 Deep underground? Or in the upper air,  
 On the shrill wind of midnight? or where floats  
 O'er twilight fields the autumnal gossamer?

## XII.

## HINTS FOR THE FANCY.

ON, loitering Muse—the swift Stream  
chides us—on!

Albeit his deep-worn channel doth im-  
mure

Objects immense portrayed in miniature,  
Wild shapes for many a strange compari-  
son!

Niagaras, Alpine passes, and anon 5  
Abodes of Naiads, calm abysses pure,  
Bright liquid mansions, fashioned to en-  
dure

When the broad oak drops, a leafless  
skeleton,

And the solidities of mortal pride,  
Palace and tower, are crumbled into  
dust!— 10

The Bard who walks with Duddon for his  
guide,

Shall find such toys of fancy thickly set:  
Turn from the sight, enamoured Muse—  
we must;

And, if thou canst, leave them without  
regret!

## XIII.

## OPEN PROSPECT.

HAIL to the fields—with Dwellings  
sprinkled o'er,

And one small hamlet, under a green hill  
Clustering, with barn and byre, and  
spouting mill!

A glance suffices;—should we wish for  
more,

Gay June would scorn us. But when  
bleak winds roar 5

Through the stiff lance-like shoots of  
pollard ash,

Dread swell of sound! loud as the gusts  
that lash

The matted forests of Ontario's shore  
By wasteful steel unsmiten—then would I

Turn into port; and, reckless of the  
gale, 10

Reckless of angry Duddon sweeping by,  
While the warm hearth exalts the mantling  
ale,

Laugh with the generous household  
heartily

At all the merry pranks of Donnerdale!

## XIV.

[Comp. before April, 1807 (1806?).—Pub. 1807<sup>1</sup>]

O MOUNTAIN Stream! the Shepherd and  
his Cot

Are privileged Inmates of deep solitude;  
Nor would the nicest Anchorite exclude  
A field or two of brighter green, or plot  
Of tillage-ground, that seemeth like a  
spot 5

Of stationary sunshine:—thou hast viewed  
These only, Duddon! with their paths  
renewed

By fits and starts, yet this contents thee  
not.

Thee hath some awful Spirit impelled to  
leave,

Utterly to desert, the haunts of men, 10  
Though simple thy companions were and  
few;

And through this wilderness a passage  
cleave

Attended but by thy own voice, save  
when

The clouds and fowls of the air thy way  
pursue!

## XV.

FROM this deep chasm, where quivering  
sunbeams play

Upon its loftiest crags, mine eyes behold  
A gloomy NICHE, capacious, blank, and  
cold;

A concave free from shrubs and mosses  
grey;

In semblance fresh, as if, with dire  
affray, 5

Some Statue, placed amid these regions  
old

For tutelary service, thence had rolled,  
Startling the flight of timid Yesterday!

Was it by mortals sculptured?—weary  
slaves

Of slow endeavour! or abruptly cast 10  
Into rude shape by fire, with roaring blast

<sup>1</sup> See Editor's note, p. 375.

Tempestuously let loose from central  
caves?  
Or fashioned by the turbulence of waves,  
Then, when o'er highest hills the Deluge  
passed?

## XVI.

## AMERICAN TRADITION.

SUCH fruitless questions may not long  
beguile  
Or plague the fancy 'mid the sculptured  
shows  
Conspicuous yet where Oroonoko flows;  
*There* would the Indian answer with a  
smile  
Aimed at the White Man's ignorance the  
while, 5  
Of the GREAT WATERS telling how they  
rose,  
Covered the plains, and, wandering where  
they chose,  
Mounted through every intricate defile,  
Triumphant.—Inundation wide and deep,  
O'er which his Fathers urged, to ridge  
and steep 10  
Else unapproachable, their buoyant way;  
And carved, on mural cliff's undreaded  
side,  
Sun, moon, and stars, and beast of chase  
or prey;  
Whate'er they sought, shunned, loved, or  
deified<sup>1</sup>!

## XVII.

## RETURN.

A DARK plume fetch me from yon blasted  
yew,  
Perched on whose top the Danish Raven  
croaks;  
Aloft, the imperial Bird of Rome invokes  
Departed ages, shedding where he flew  
Loose fragments of wild wailing, that  
bestrew 5  
The clouds and thrill the chambers of the  
rocks;  
And into silence hush the timorous flocks,  
That, calmly couching while the nightly  
dew

Moistened each fleece, beneath the twink-  
ling stars  
Slept amid that lone Camp on Hardknot's  
height<sup>2</sup>, 10  
Whose Guardians bent the knee to Jove  
and Mars:  
Or near that mystic Round of Druid  
frame  
Tardily sinking by its proper weight  
Deep into patient Earth, from whose  
smooth breast it came!

## XVIII.

## SEATHWAITE CHAPEL.

SACRED Religion! "mother of form and  
fear,"  
Dread arbitress of mutable respect,  
New rites ordaining when the old are  
wrecked,  
Or cease to please the fickle worshipper;  
Mother of Love! (that name best suits  
thee here) 5  
Mother of Love! for this deep vale, protect  
Truth's holy lamp, pure source of bright  
effect,  
Gifted to purge the vapoury atmosphere  
That seeks to stifle it;—as in those days  
When this low Pile<sup>3</sup> a Gospel Teacher  
knew, 10  
Whose good works formed an endless  
retinue:  
A Pastor such as Chaucer's verse por-  
trays;  
Such as the heaven-taught skill of Herbert  
drew;  
And tender Goldsmith crowned with  
deathless praise!

## XIX.

## TRIBUTARY STREAM.

My frame hath often trembled with de-  
light  
When hope presented some far-distant  
good,  
That seemed from heaven descending,  
like the flood  
Of yon pure waters, from their aery height  
Hurrying, with lordly Duddon to unite; 5

<sup>1</sup> See Humboldt's Personal Narrative.<sup>2</sup> See Note, p. 208.<sup>3</sup> See Note, p. 208.

Who, 'mid a world of images imprint  
On the calm depth of his transparent  
breast,  
Appears to cherish most that Torrent  
white,  
The fairest, softest, liveliest of them all!  
And seldom hath ear listened to a tune so  
More lulling than the busy hum of Noon,  
Swoln by that voice—whose murmur  
musical  
Announces to the thirsty fields a boon  
Dewy and fresh, till showers again shall  
fall.

## XX.

## THE PLAIN OF DONNERDALE.

THE old inventive Poets, had they seen,  
Or rather felt, the entrancement that  
detains  
Thy waters, Duddon! 'mid these flowery  
plains;  
The still repose, the liquid lapse serene,  
Transferred to bowers imperishably  
green,  
Had beautified Elysium! But these  
chains  
Will soon be broken;—a rough course  
remains,  
Rough as the past; where Thou, of placid  
mien,  
Innocuous as a firstling of the flock,  
And countenanced like a soft cerulean  
sky,  
Shalt change thy temper; and, with many  
a shock  
Given and received in mutual jeopardy,  
Dance, like a Bacchanal, from rock to  
rock,  
Tossing her frantic thyrsus wide and  
high!

## XXI.

WHENCE that low voice?—A whisper from  
the heart,  
That told of days long past, when here  
I roved  
With friends and kindred tenderly be-  
loved;  
Some who had early mandates to depart,

Yet are allowed to steal my path athwart  
By Duddon's side; once more do we  
unite,  
Once more beneath the kind Earth's  
tranquil light;  
And smothered joys into new being start.  
From her unworthy seat, the cloudy stall  
Of Time, breaks forth triumphant Me-  
mory;  
Her glistering tresses bound, yet light  
and free  
As golden locks of birch, that rise and fall  
On gales that breathe too gently to recall  
Aught of the fading year's inclemency!

## XXII.

## TRADITION.

A LOVE-LORN Maid, at some far-distant  
time,  
Came to this hidden pool, whose depths  
surpass  
In crystal clearness Dian's looking-glass;  
And, gazing, saw that Rose, which from  
the prime  
Derives its name, reflected as the chime  
Of echo doth reverberate some sweet  
sound:  
The starry treasure from the blue pro-  
found  
She longed to ravish;—shall she plunge,  
or climb  
The humid precipice, and seize the guest  
Of April, smiling high in upper air?  
Desperate alternative! what fiend could  
dare  
To prompt the thought?—Upon the steep  
rock's breast  
The lonely Primrose yet renews its bloom,  
Untouched memento of her hapless doom!

## XXIII.

## SHEEP-WASHING.

SAD thoughts, avault!—partake we their  
blithe cheer  
Who gathered in betimes the unshorn  
flock  
To wash the fleece, where haply bands of  
rock,

Checking the stream, make a pool smooth  
and clear  
As this we look on. Distant Mountains  
hear, 5  
Hear and repeat, the turmoil that unites  
Clamour of boys with innocent despites  
Of barking dogs, and bleatings from  
strange fear.  
And what if Duddon's spotless flood  
receive  
Unwelcome mixtures as the uncouth  
noise 10  
Thickens, the pastoral River will forgive  
Such wrong; nor need we blame the  
licensed joys,  
Though false to Nature's quiet equipoise:  
Frank are the sports, the stains are fugitive.

## XXIV.

## THE RESTING-PLACE.

MID-NOON is past;—upon the sultry mead  
No zephyr breathes, no cloud its shadow  
throws:  
If we advance unstrengthened by repose,  
Farewell the solace of the vagrant reed!  
This Nook—with woodbine hung and  
straggling weed, 5  
Tempting recess as ever pilgrim chose,  
Half grot, half arbour—proffers to enclose  
Body and mind, from molestation freed,  
In narrow compass—narrow as itself:  
Or if the Fancy, too industrious Elf, 10  
Be loth that we should breathe awhile  
exempt  
From new incitements friendly to our task,  
Here wants not stealthy prospect, that  
may tempt  
Loose Idless to forego her wily mask.

## XXV.

METHINKS 'twere no unprecedented feat  
Should some benignant Minister of air  
Lift, and encircle with a cloudy chair,  
The One for whom my heart shall ever beat  
With tenderest love;—or, if a safer seat 5  
Atween his downy wings be furnished,  
there  
Would lodge her, and the cherished bur-  
den bear  
O'er hill and valley to this dim retreat!

Rough ways my steps have trod;—too  
rough and long  
For her companionship; here dwells soft  
ease: 10  
With sweets that she partakes not some  
distaste  
Mingles, and lurking consciousness of  
wrong;  
Languish the flowers; the waters seem to  
waste  
Their vocal charm; their sparklings cease  
to please.

## XXVI.

RETURN, Content! for fondly I pursued,  
Even when a child, the Streams—unheard,  
unseen;  
Through tangled woods, impending rocks  
between;  
Or, free as air, with flying inquest viewed  
The sullen reservoirs whence their bold  
brood— 5  
Pure as the morning, fretful, boisterous,  
keen,  
Green as the salt-sea billows, white and  
green—  
Poured down the hills, a choral multi-  
tude!  
Nor have I tracked their course for scanty  
gains;  
They taught me random cares and truant  
joys, 10  
That shield from mischief and preserve  
from stains  
Vague minds, while men are growing out  
of boys;  
Maturer Fancy owes to their rough noise  
Impetuous thoughts that brook not servile  
reins.

## XXVII.

[Composed probably between 1815-1819.—Pub-  
lished 1819<sup>1</sup>.]

FALLEN, and diffused into a shapeless  
heap,  
Or quietly self-buried in earth's mould,  
Is that embattled House, whose massy  
Keep

<sup>1</sup> See Editor's Note, p. 375.

Flung from yon cliff a shadow large and cold.  
 There dwelt the gay, the bountiful, the bold;  
 Till nightly lamentations, like the sweep  
 Of winds—though winds were silent—  
 struck a deep  
 And lasting terror through that ancient Hold.  
 Its line of Warriors fled;—they shrunk  
 when tried  
 By ghostly power:—but Time's unsparing hand  
 Hath plucked such foes, like weeds, from  
 out the land;  
 And now, if men with men in peace abide,  
 All other strength the weakest may with-  
 stand,  
 All worse assaults may safely be defied.

## XXVIII.

## JOURNEY RENEWED.

I ROSE while yet the cattle, heat-opprest,  
 Crowded together under rustling trees  
 Brushed by the current of the water-  
 breeze;  
 And for *their* sakes, and love of all that  
 rest,  
 On Duddon's margin, in the sheltering  
 nest;  
 For all the startled scaly tribes that slink  
 Into his coverts, and each fearless link  
 Of dancing insects forged upon his breast;  
 For these, and hopes and recollections  
 worn  
 Close to the vital seat of human clay; 10  
 Glad meetings, tender partings, that up-  
 stay  
 The drooping mind of absence, by vows  
 sworn  
 In his pure presence near the trysting  
 thorn—  
 I thanked the Leader of my onward way.

## XXIX.

No record tells of lance opposed to lance,  
 Horse charging horse, 'mid these retired  
 domains;  
 Tells that their turf drank purple from  
 the veins

Of heroes, fallen, or struggling to advance,  
 Till doubtful combat issued in a trance 5  
 Of victory, that struck through heart and  
 reins  
 Even to the inmost seat of mortal pains,  
 And lightened o'er the pallid countenance.  
 Yet, to the loyal and the brave, who lie  
 In the blank earth, neglected and for-  
 lorn, 10  
 The passing Winds memorial tribute pay;  
 The Torrents chant their praise, inspiring  
 scorn  
 Of power usurped; with proclamation  
 high,  
 And glad acknowledgment, of lawful sway.

## XXX.

WHO swerves from innocence, who makes  
 divorce  
 Of that serene companion—a good name,  
 Recovers not his loss; but walks with  
 shame,  
 With doubt, with fear, and haply with  
 remorse:  
 And oft-times he—who, yielding to the  
 force 5  
 Of chance-temptation, ere his journey end,  
 From chosen comrade turns, or faithful  
 friend—  
 In vain shall rue the broken intercourse.  
 Not so with such as loosely wear the chain  
 That binds them, pleasant River! to thy  
 side:— 10  
 Through the rough copse wheel thou with  
 hasty stride;  
 I choose to saunter o'er the grassy plain,  
 Sure, when the separation has been tried,  
 That we, who part in love, shall meet  
 again.

## XXXI.

THE KIRK OF ULPHA to the pilgrim's eye  
 Is welcome as a star, that doth present  
 Its shining forehead through the peaceful  
 rent  
 Of a black cloud diffused o'er half the sky:  
 Or as a fruitful palm-tree towering high 5  
 O'er the parched waste beside an Arab's  
 tent;  
 Or the Indian tree whose branches, down-  
 ward bent,

Take root again, a boundless canopy.  
 How sweet were leisure! could it yield no  
     more  
 Than 'mid that wave-washed Churchyard  
     to recline, 10  
 From pastoral graves extracting thoughts  
     divine;  
 Or there to pace, and mark the summits hoar  
 Of distant moon-lit mountains faintly  
     shine,  
 Soothed by the unseen River's gentle roar.

## XXXII.

Nor hurled precipitous from steep to  
     steep;  
 Lingered no more 'mid flower-enamelled  
     lands  
 And blooming thickets; nor by rocky  
     bands  
 Held; but in radiant progress toward the  
     Deep  
 Where mightiest rivers into powerless  
     sleep 5  
 Sink, and forget their nature—now ex-  
     pands  
 Majestic Duddon, over smooth flat sands  
 Gliding in silence with unfettered sweep!  
 Beneath an ampler sky a region wide  
 Is opened round him:—hamlets, towers,  
     and towns, 10  
 And blue-topped hills, behold him from  
     afar;  
 In stately mien to sovereign Thames allied  
 Spreading his bosom under Kentish  
     downs,  
 With commerce freighted, or triumphant  
     war.

## XXXIII.

## CONCLUSION.

BUT here no cannon thunders to the gale;  
 Upon the wave no haughty pendants cast  
 A crimson splendour: lowly is the mast

That rises here, and humbly spread, the  
     sail;  
 While, less disturbed than in the narrow  
     Vale  
 Through which with strange vicissitudes 5  
     he passed,  
 The Wanderer seeks that receptacle vast  
 Where all his unambitious functions fail  
 And may thy Poet, cloud-born Stream!  
     be free—  
 The sweets of earth contentedly resigned,  
 And each tumultuous working left be-  
     hind 11  
 At seemly distance—to advance like Thee;  
 Prepared, in peace of heart, in calm of  
     mind  
 And soul, to mingle with Eternity!

## XXXIV.

## AFTER-THOUGHT.

*I THOUGHT of Thee, my partner and my  
     guide,  
 As being past away.—Vain sympathies!  
 For, backward, Duddon! as I cast my  
     eyes,  
 I see what was, and is, and will abide;  
 Still glides the Stream, and shall for ever  
     glide; 5  
 The Form remains, the Function never  
     dies;  
 While we, the brave, the mighty, and the  
     wise,  
 We Men, who in our morn of youth de-  
     fed  
 The elements, must vanish;—be it so!  
 Enough, if something from our hands have  
     power 10  
 To live, and act, and serve the future hour;  
 And if, as toward the silent tomb we go,  
 Through love, through hope, and faith's  
     transcendent dower,  
 We feel that we are greater than we know.*

# YARROW REVISITED, AND OTHER POEMS.

COMPOSED (TWO EXCEPTED) DURING A TOUR IN SCOTLAND, AND ON THE  
ENGLISH BORDER, IN THE AUTUMN OF 1831<sup>1</sup>.

TO

SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.,

AS A TESTIMONY OF FRIENDSHIP AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF INTELLECTUAL  
OBLIGATIONS, THESE MEMORIALS ARE AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

RYDAL MOUNT, Dec. 11, 1834.

The following Stanzas are a memorial of a day  
passed with Sir Walter Scott and other Friends  
visiting the Banks of the Yarrow under his  
guidance, immediately before his departure  
from Abbotsford, for Naples.

The title "Yarrow Revisited" will stand in no  
need of explanation for Readers acquainted  
with the Author's previous poems suggested  
by that celebrated Stream.

## I.

THE gallant Youth, who may have gained,  
Or seeks, a "winsome Marrow,"  
Was but an Infant in the lap  
When first I looked on Yarrow;  
Once more, by Newark's Castle-gate 5  
Long left without a warder,  
I stood, looked, listened, and with Thee,  
Great Minstrel of the Border!

Grave thoughts ruled wide on that sweet  
day,  
Their dignity installing 10  
In gentle bosoms, while sere leaves  
Were on the bough, or falling;

But breezes played, and sunshine gleam-  
ed—

The forest to embolden;  
Reddened the fiery hues, and shot 15  
Transparence through the golden.

For busy thoughts the Stream flowed on  
In foamy agitation;  
And slept in many a crystal pool  
For quiet contemplation: 20  
No public and no private care  
The freeborn mind enthralling,  
We made a day of happy hours,  
Our happy days recalling.

Brisk Youth appeared, the Morn of  
Youth, 25  
With freaks of graceful folly,—  
Life's temperate Noon, her sober Eve,  
Her Night not melancholy;  
Past, present, future, all appeared  
In harmony united, 30  
Like guests that meet, and some from far,  
By cordial love invited.

<sup>1</sup> The poems of this series, with two exceptions (conjectured by Prof. Knight to be Nos. xv. and xvii.), were written during the autumn of 1831, and first published in the vol. of 1835 entitled, *Yarrow Revisited, and Other Poems*. In order to avoid needless repetition, separate chronological notes will not be added to the individual poems of the series, save where the particulars of composition or publication differ in some respect from those now given.—Ed.

And if, as Yarrow, through the woods  
 And down the meadow ranging,  
 Did meet us with unaltered face, 35  
 Though we were changed and changing;  
 If, *then*, some natural shadows spread  
 Our inward prospect over,  
 The soul's deep valley was not slow  
 Its brightness to recover. 40

Eternal blessings on the Muse,  
 And her divine employment!  
 The blameless Muse, who trains her Sons  
 For hope and calm enjoyment;  
 Albeit sickness, lingering yet, 45  
 Has o'er their pillow brooded;  
 And Care waylays their steps—a Sprite  
 Not easily eluded.

For thee, O SCOTT! compelled to change  
 Green Eildon-hill and Cheviot 50  
 For warm Vesuvio's vine-clad slopes;  
 And leave thy Tweed and Tiviot  
 For mild Sorento's breezy waves;  
 May classic Fancy, linking  
 With native Fancy her fresh aid, 55  
 Preserve thy heart from sinking!

Oh! while they minister to thee,  
 Each vying with the other,  
 May Health return to mellow Age,  
 With Strength, her venturous brother;  
 And Tiber, and each brook and rill 61  
 Renowned in song and story,  
 With unimagined beauty shine,  
 Nor lose one ray of glory!

For Thou, upon a hundred streams, 65  
 By tales of love and sorrow,  
 Of faithful love, undaunted truth,  
 Hast shed the power of Yarrow;  
 And streams unknown, hills yet unseen,  
 Wherever they invite Thee, 70  
 At parent Nature's grateful call,  
 With gladness must requite Thee.

A gracious welcome shall be thine,  
 Such looks of love and honour  
 As thy own Yarrow gave to me 75  
 When first I gazed upon her;  
 Beheld what I had feared to see,  
 Unwilling to surrender  
 Dreams treasured up from early days,  
 The holy and the tender. 80

And what, for this frail world, were all  
 That mortals do or suffer,  
 Did no responsive harp, no pen,  
 Memorial tribute offer?  
 Yea, what were mighty Nature's self? 85  
 Her features, could they win us,  
 Unhelped by the poetic voice  
 That hourly speaks within us?

Nor deem that localised Romance  
 Plays false with our affections; 90  
 Unsanctifies our tears—made sport  
 For fanciful dejections:  
 Ah, no! the visions of the past  
 Sustain the heart in feeling  
 Life as she is—our changeful Life, 95  
 With friends and kindred dealing.

Bear witness, Ye, whose thoughts that day  
 In Yarrow's groves were centred;  
 Who through the silent portal arch  
 Of mouldering Newark entered; 100  
 And clomb the winding stair that once  
 Too timidly was mounted  
 By the "last Minstrel," (not the last!)  
 Ere he his Tale recounted.

Flow on for ever, Yarrow Stream! 105  
 Fulfil thy pensive duty,  
 Well pleased that future Bards should  
 chant  
 For simple hearts thy beauty;  
 To dream-light dear while yet unseen,  
 Dear to the common sunshine, 110  
 And dearer still, as now I feel,  
 To memory's shadowy moonshine!

## II.

ON THE DEPARTURE OF SIR WALTER SCOTT  
 FROM ABBOTSFORD, FOR NAPLES.

[Composed September, 1831.—Published 1833 (*Literary Souvenir of Alaric Watts*); vol. of 1835.]

A TROUBLE, not of clouds, or weeping rain,  
 Nor of the setting sun's pathetic light  
 Engendered, hangs o'er Eildon's triple  
 height:  
 Spirits of Power, assembled there, complain  
 For kindred Power departing from their  
 sight; 5

While Tweed, best pleased in chanting a  
 blithe strain,  
 Saddens his voice again, and yet again.  
 Lift up your hearts, ye Mourners! for the  
 night  
 Of the whole world's good wishes with  
 him goes;  
 Blessings and prayers in nobler retinue  
 Than sceptred king or laurelled conqueror  
 knows, II  
 Follow this wondrous Potentate. Be true,  
 Ye winds of ocean, and the midland sea,  
 Wafting your Charge to soft Parthenope!

## III.

A PLACE OF BURIAL IN THE SOUTH OF  
SCOTLAND.

PART fenced by man, part by a rugged  
 steep  
 That curbs a foaming brook, a Grave-  
 yard lies;  
 The hare's best couching-place for fear-  
 less sleep;  
 Which moonlit elves, far seen by credulous  
 eyes,  
 Enter in dance. Of church, or sabbath ties,  
 No vestige now remains; yet thither creep  
 Bereft Ones, and in lowly anguish weep  
 Their prayers out to the wind and naked  
 skies.  
 Proud tomb is none; but rudely-sculp-  
 tured knights,  
 By humble choice of plain old times, are  
 seen IO  
 Level with earth, among the hillocks  
 green:  
 Union not sad, when sunny daybreak  
 smites  
 The spangled turf, and neighbouring  
 thickets ring  
 With *jubilate* from the choirs of spring!

## IV.

ON THE SIGHT OF A MANSE IN THE SOUTH  
OF SCOTLAND.

SAY, ye far-travelled clouds, far-seeing  
 hills—  
 Among the happiest-looking homes of men  
 Scattered all Britain over, through deep  
 glen,

On airy upland, and by forest rills,  
 And o'er wide plains cheered by the lark  
 that trills 5  
 His sky-born warblings—does aught meet  
 your ken  
 More fit to animate the Poet's pen,  
 Aught that more surely by its aspect  
 fills  
 Pure minds with sinless envy, than the  
 Abode  
 Of the good Priest: who, faithful through  
 all hours IO  
 To his high charge, and truly serving  
 God,  
 Has yet a heart and hand for trees and  
 flowers,  
 Enjoys the walks his predecessors trod,  
 Nor covets lineal rights in lands and  
 towers.

## V.

COMPOSED IN ROSLIN CHAPEL DURING  
A STORM.

THE wind is now thy organist;—a clank  
 (We know not whence) ministers for a  
 bell  
 To mark some change of service. As the  
 swell  
 Of music reached its height, and even  
 when sank  
 The notes, in prelude, ROSLIN! to a  
 blank 5  
 Of silence, how it thrilled thy sumptuous  
 roof,  
 Pillars, and arches,—not in vain time-  
 proof,  
 Though Christian rites be wanting! From  
 what bank  
 Came those live herbs? by what hand  
 were they sown  
 Where dew falls not, where rain-drops  
 seem unknown? IO  
 Yet in the Temple they a friendly niche  
 Share with their sculptured fellows, that,  
 green-grown,  
 Copy their beauty more and more, and  
 preach,  
 Though mute, of all things blending into  
 one.

## VI.

## THE TROSACHS.

THERE's not a nook within this solemn  
 Pass  
 But were an apt confessional for One  
 Taught by his summer spent, his autumn  
 gone,  
 That Life is but a tale of morning grass  
 Withered at eve. From scenes of art  
 which chase<sup>5</sup>  
 That thought away, turn, and with watch-  
 ful eyes  
 Feed it 'mid Nature's old felicities,  
 Rocks, rivers, and smooth lakes more  
 clear than glass  
 Untouched, unbreathed upon. Thrice  
 happy quest,  
 If from a golden perch of aspen spray<sup>10</sup>  
 (October's workmanship to rival May)  
 The pensive warbler of the ruddy breast  
 That moral sweeten by a heaven-taught  
 lay,  
 Lulling the year, with all its cares, to  
 rest!

## VII.

THE pibroch's note, discountenanced or  
 mute;  
 The Roman kilt, degraded to a toy  
 Of quaint apparel for a half-spoilt boy;  
 The target mouldering like ungathered  
 fruit;<sup>4</sup>  
 The smoking steam-boat eager in pur-  
 suit,  
 As eagerly pursued; the umbrella spread  
 To weather-fend the Celtic herdsman's  
 head—  
 All speak of manners withering to the  
 root,  
 And of old honours, too, and passions  
 high:  
 Then may we ask, though pleased that  
 thought should range<sup>10</sup>  
 Among the conquests of civility,  
 Survives imagination—to the change  
 Superior? Help to virtue does she give?  
 If not, O Mortals, better cease to live!

## VIII.

## COMPOSED IN THE GLEN OF LOCH ETIVE.

"THIS Land of Rainbows spanning glens  
 whose walls,  
 Rock-built, are hung with rainbow-  
 coloured mists—  
 Of far-stretched Meres whose salt flood  
 never rests—  
 Of tuneful Caves and playful Waterfalls—  
 Of Mountains varying momentarily their  
 crests—<sup>5</sup>  
 Proud be this Land! whose poorest huts<sup>5</sup>  
 are halls  
 Where Fancy entertains becoming guests;  
 While native song the heroic Past recalls."  
 Thus, in the net of her own wishes caught,  
 The Muse exclaimed; but Story now must  
 hide<sup>10</sup>  
 Her trophies, Fancy crouch; the course  
 of pride  
 Has been diverted, other lessons taught,  
 That make the Patriot-spirit bow her  
 head  
 Where the all-conquering Roman feared  
 to tread.

## IX.

## EAGLES.

Composed at Dunollie Castle in the bay of Oban.  
 DISHONOUR'D Rock and Ruin! that, by  
 law  
 Tyrannic, keep the Bird of Jove em-  
 barred  
 Like a lone criminal whose life is spared.  
 Vexed is he, and screams loud. The last  
 I saw  
 Was on the wing; stooping, he struck  
 with awe<sup>5</sup>  
 Man, bird, and beast; then, with a consort  
 paired,  
 From a bold headland, their loved aery's  
 guard,  
 Flew high above Atlantic waves, to draw  
 Light from the fountain of the setting  
 sun.  
 Such was this Prisoner once; and when  
 his plumes<sup>10</sup>  
 The sea-blast ruffles as the storm comes on,

Then, for a moment, he, in spirit, resumes  
His rank 'mong freeborn creatures that  
live free,  
His power, his beauty, and his majesty.

X.

IN THE SOUND OF MULL.

TRADITION, be thou mute! Oblivion,  
throw  
Thy veil in mercy o'er the records, hung  
Round strath and mountain, stamped by  
the ancient tongue  
On rock and ruin darkening as we go,—  
Spots where a word, ghost-like, survives  
to show 5  
What crimes from hate, or desperate love,  
have sprung;  
From honour misconceived, or fancied  
wrong,  
What feuds, not quenched but fed by  
mutual woe.  
Yet, though a wild vindictive Race, un-  
tamed  
By civil arts and labours of the pen, 10  
Could gentleness be scorned by those  
fierce Men,  
Who, to spread wide the reverence they  
claimed  
For patriarchal occupations, named  
Yon towering Peaks, "Shepherds of Etive  
Glen<sup>1</sup>?"

XI.

SUGGESTED AT TYNDRUM IN A STORM.

ENOUGH of garlands, of the Arcadian  
crook,  
And all that Greece and Italy have sung  
Of Swains reposing myrtle groves among!  
*Ours* couch on naked rocks,—will cross a  
brook  
Swoln with chill rains, nor ever cast a  
look 5  
This way or that, or give it even a thought  
More than by smoothest pathway may be  
brought  
Into a vacant mind. Can written book  
Teach what *they* learn? Up, hardy Moun-  
taineer!

<sup>1</sup> In Gaelic, *Buachaill Ette*.

And guide the Bard, ambitious to be One  
Of Nature's privy council, as thou art, 11  
On cloud-sequestered heights, that see  
and hear

To what dread Powers He delegates his  
part

On Earth, who works in the heaven of  
heavens, alone.

XII.

THE EARL OF BREADALBANE'S RUINED MAN-  
SION, AND FAMILY BURIAL-PLACE, NEAR  
KILLIN.

WELL sang the Bard who called the grave,  
in strains  
Thoughtful and sad, the "narrow house."  
No style

Of fond sepulchral flattery can beguile  
Grief of her sting; nor cheat, where he  
detains

The sleeping dust, stern Death. How  
reconcile 5

With truth, or with each other, decked  
remains

Of a once warm Abode, and that *new* Pile,  
For the departed, built with curious pains  
And mausolean pomp? Yet here they  
stand

Together,—'mid trim walks and artful  
bowers, 10

To be looked down upon by ancient hills,  
That, for the living and the dead, demand  
And prompt a harmony of genuine  
powers;

Concord that elevates the mind, and  
stills.

XIII.

"REST AND BE THANKFUL."

At the Head of Glencroe.

DOUBLING and doubling with laborious  
walk,

Who, that has gained at length the  
wished-for Height,

This brief this simple wayside Call can  
slight,

And rests not thankful? Whether cheered  
by talk

With some loved friend, or by the unseen  
hawk 5

Whistling to clouds and sky-born streams,  
 that shine  
 At the sun's outbreak, as with light divine,  
 Ere they descend to nourish root and  
 stalk  
 Of valley flowers. Nor, while the limbs  
 repose,  
 Will we forget that, as the fowl can keep  
 Absolute stillness, poised aloft in air, 11  
 And fishes front, unmoved, the torrent's  
 sweep,—  
 So may the Soul, through powers that  
 Faith bestows,  
 Win rest, and ease, and peace, with bliss  
 that Angels share.

## XIV.

## HIGHLAND HUT.

SEE what gay wild flowers deck this  
 earth-built Cot,  
 Whose smoke, forth-issuing whence and  
 how it may,  
 Shines in the greeting of the sun's first ray  
 Like wreaths of vapour without stain or  
 blot.  
 The limpid mountain-rill avoids it not; 5  
 And why shouldst thou?—If rightly  
 trained and bred,  
 Humanity is humble, finds no spot  
 Which her Heaven-guided feet refuse to  
 tread.  
 The walls are cracked, sunk is the flowery  
 roof,  
 Undressed the pathway leading to the  
 door; 10  
 But love, as Nature loves, the lonely  
 Poor;  
 Search, for their worth, some gentle heart  
 wrong-proof,  
 Meek, patient, kind, and, were its trials  
 fever,  
 Belike less happy.—Stand no more aloof!<sup>1</sup>

## XV.

## THE HIGHLAND BROACH.

The exact resemblance which the old Broach  
 (still in use, though rarely met with, among  
 the Highlanders) bears to the Roman Fibula

must strike every one, and concurs with the  
 plaid and kilt to recall to mind the commu-  
 nication which the ancient Romans had with  
 this remote country.

If to Tradition faith be due,  
 And echoes from old verse speak true,  
 Ere the meek Saint, Columba, bore  
 Glad tidings to Iona's shore,  
 No common light of nature blessed 5  
 The mountain region of the west,  
 A land where gentle manners ruled  
 O'er men in dauntless virtues schooled,  
 That raised, for centuries, a bar  
 Impervious to the tide of war: 10  
 Yet peaceful Arts did entrance gain  
 Where haughty Force had striven in vain;  
 And, 'mid the works of skilful hands,  
 By wanderers brought from foreign lands  
 And various climes, was not unknown 15  
 The clasp that fixed the Roman Gown;  
 The Fibula, whose shape, I ween,  
 Still in the Highland Broach is seen,  
 The silver Broach of massy frame,  
 Worn at the breast of some grave Dame  
 On road or path, or at the door 21  
 Of fern-thatched hut on heathy moor:  
 But delicate of yore its mould,  
 And the material finest gold;  
 As might besem the fairest Fair, 25  
 Whether she graced a royal chair,  
 Or shed, within a vaulted hall,  
 No fancied lustre on the wall  
 Where shields of mighty heroes hung,  
 While Fingal heard what Ossian sung. 30

The heroic Age expired—it slept  
 Deep in its tomb:—the bramble crept  
 O'er Fingal's hearth; the grassy sod  
 Grew on the floors his sons had trod:  
 Malvina! where art thou? Their state 35  
 The noblest-born must abdicate;  
 The fairest, while with fire and sword  
 Come Spoilers—horde impelling horde,  
 Must walk the sorrowing mountains, drest  
 By ruder hands in homelier vest. 40  
 Yet still the female bosom lent,  
 And loved to borrow, ornament;  
 Still was its inner world a place  
 Reached by the dews of heavenly grace;  
 Still pity to this last retreat 45  
 Clove fondly; to his favourite seat

<sup>1</sup> See Note p. 915.

Love wound his way by soft approach,  
Beneath a massier Highland Broach.

When alternations came of rage  
Yet fiercer, in a darker age; 50  
And feuds, where, clan encountering clan,  
The weaker perished to a man;  
For maid and mother, when despair  
Might else have triumphed, baffling  
prayer,

One small possession lacked not power,  
Provided in a calmer hour, 56  
To meet such need as might befall—  
Roof, raiment, bread, or burial:  
For woman, even of tears bereft,  
The hidden silver Broach was left. 60

As generations come and go,  
Their arts, their customs, ebb and flow;  
Fate, fortune, sweep strong powers away,  
And feeble, of themselves, decay;  
What poor abodes the heirloom hide, 65  
In which the castle once took pride!  
Tokens, once kept as boasted wealth,  
If saved at all, are saved by stealth.  
Lo! ships, from seas by nature barred,  
Mount along ways by man prepared; 70  
And in far-stretching vales, whose streams  
Seek other seas, their canvass gleams.  
Lo! busy towns spring up, on coasts  
Thronged yesterday by airy ghosts;  
Soon, like a lingering star forlorn 75  
Among the novelties of morn,  
While young delights on old encroach,  
Will vanish the last Highland Broach.

But when, from out their viewless bed,  
Like vapours, years have rolled and  
spread; 80

And this poor verse, and worthier lays,  
Shall yield no light of love or praise;  
Then, by the spade, or cleaving plough,  
Or torrent from the mountain's brow,  
Or whirlwind, reckless what his might 85  
Entombs, or forces into light;  
Blind Chance, a volunteer ally,  
That oft befriends Antiquity,  
And clears Oblivion from reproach, 89  
May render back the Highland Broach<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> How much the Broach is sometimes prized by persons in humble stations may be gathered from an occurrence mentioned to me by a female

## XVI.

### THE BROWNIE.

Upon a small island, not far from the head of Loch Lomond, are some remains of an ancient building, which was for several years the abode of a solitary Individual, one of the last survivors of the clan of Macfarlane, once powerful in that neighbourhood. Passing along the shore opposite this island in the year 1814, the Author learned these particulars, and that this person then living there had acquired the appellation of "The Brownie." See "The Brownie's Cell," to which the following is a sequel.

"How disappeared he?" Ask the newt and toad;

Ask of his fellow-men, and they will tell  
How he was found, cold as an icicle,  
Under an arch of that forlorn abode;  
Where he, unpropped, and by the gathering  
flood 5

Of years hemmed round, had dwelt, prepared to try  
Privation's worst extremities, and die  
With no one near save the omnipresent  
God.

Verily so to live was an awful choice—  
A choice that wears the aspect of a doom;  
But in the mould of mercy all is cast 11  
For Souls familiar with the eternal Voice;  
And this forgotten Taper to the last  
Drove from itself, we trust, all frightful  
gloom.

## XVII.

### TO THE PLANET VENUS, AN EVENING STAR.

Composed at Loch Lomond.

THOUGH joy attend Thee orient at the  
birth

Of dawn, it cheers the lofty spirit most  
To watch thy course when Daylight, fled  
from earth,

friend. She had had an opportunity of benefiting a poor old woman in her own hut, who, wishing to make a return, said to her daughter in Erse, in a tone of plaintive earnestness, "I would give anything I have, but I *hope* she does not wish for my Broach!" and, uttering these words, she put her hand upon the Broach which fastened her kerchief, and which, she imagined, had attracted the eye of her benefactress.

In the grey sky hath left his lingering  
 Ghost,  
 Perplexed as if between a splendour lost  
 And splendour slowly mustering. Since  
 the Sun, 6  
 The absolute, the world-absorbing One,  
 Relinquished half his empire to the host  
 Emboldened by thy guidance, holy Star,  
 Holy as princely, who that looks on thee  
 Touching, as now, in thy humility 11  
 The mountain-borders of this seat of care,  
 Can question that thy countenance is  
 bright,  
 Celestial Power, as much with love as light?

## XVIII.

## BOTHWELL CASTLE.

(Passed unseen, on account of stormy weather.)  
 IMMURED in Bothwell's towers, at times  
 the Brave  
 (So beautiful is Clyde) forgot to mourn  
 The liberty they lost at Bannockburn.  
 Once on those steeps I roamed at large,  
 and have 4  
 In mind the landscape, as if still in sight;  
 The river glides, the woods before me wave;  
 Then why repine that now in vain I crave  
 Needless renewal of an old delight?  
 Better to thank a dear and long-past day  
 For joy its sunny hours were free to give  
 Than blame the present, that our wish  
 hath crost. 11  
 Memory, like sleep, hath powers which  
 dreams obey,  
 Dreams, vivid dreams, that are not fugitive;  
 How little that she cherishes is lost!

## XIX.

PICTURE OF DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN,  
 AT HAMILTON PALACE.

AMID a fertile region green with wood  
 And fresh with rivers, well did it become  
 The ducal Owner, in his palace-home  
 To naturalise this tawny Lion brood;  
 Children of Art, that claim strange brotherhood 5  
 (Couched in their den) with those that  
 roam at large  
 Over the burning wilderness, and charge

The wind with terror while they roar for  
 food.  
 Satiated are these; and stilled to eye and  
 ear;  
 Hence, while we gaze, a more enduring  
 fear! 10  
 Yet is the Prophet calm, nor would the  
 cave  
 Daunt him—if his Companions, now bedrowsed  
 Outstretched and listless, were by hunger  
 roused:  
 Man placed him here, and God, he knows,  
 can save.

## XX.

## THE AVON.

(A feeder of the Annan.)

AVON—a precious, an immortal name!  
 Yet is it one that other rivulets bear  
 Like this unheard-of, and their channels  
 wear  
 Like this contented, though unknown to  
 Fame:  
 For great and sacred is the modest claim  
 Of Streams to Nature's love, where'er  
 they flow; 6  
 And ne'er did Genius slight them, as they  
 go,  
 Tree, flower, and green herb, feeding  
 without blame.  
 But Praise can waste her voice on work  
 of tears,  
 Anguish, and death: full oft where innocent blood 10  
 Has mixed its current with the limpid  
 flood,  
 Her heaven-offending trophies Glory  
 rears:  
 Never for like distinction mark the good  
 Shrink from *thy* name, pure Rill, with  
 unpleased ears.

## XXI.

SUGGESTED BY A VIEW FROM AN EMINENCE  
 IN INGLEWOOD FOREST.

THE forest huge of ancient Caledon  
 Is but a name, no more is Inglewood,  
 That swept from hill to hill, from flood to  
 flood:

On her last thorn the nightly moon has  
shone;  
Yet still, though inappropriate Wild be  
none, 5  
Fair parks spread wide where Adam Bell  
might deign  
With Clym o' the Clough, were they alive  
again,  
To kill for merry feast their venison.  
Nor wants the holy Abbot's gliding Shade  
His church with monumental wreck be-  
strown; 10  
The feudal Warrior-chief, a Ghost un-  
laid,  
Hath still his castle, though a skele-  
ton,  
That he may watch by night, and lessons  
con  
Of power that perishes, and rights that  
fade.

XXII.

HART'S-HORN TREE, NEAR PENRITH.

HERE stood an Oak, that long had borne  
affixed  
To his huge trunk, or, with more subtle  
art,  
Among its withering topmost branches  
mixed,  
The palmy antlers of a hunted Hart,  
Whom the Dog Hercules pursued—his  
part 5  
Each desperately sustaining, till at last  
Both sank and died, the life-veins of the  
chased  
And chaser bursting here with one dire  
smart.  
Mutual the victory, mutual the defeat!  
High was the trophy hung with pitiless  
pride; 10  
Say, rather, with that generous sym-  
pathy  
That wants not, even in rudest breasts, a  
seat;  
And, for this feeling's sake, let no one  
chide  
Verse that would guard thy memory,  
HART'S-HORN TREE<sup>1</sup>!

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 217.

XXIII.

FANCY AND TRADITION.

[Composed 1833.—Published 1855.]

THE Lovers took within this ancient  
grove  
Their last embrace; beside those crystal  
springs  
The Hermit saw the Angel spread his  
wings  
For instant flight; the Sage in yon alcove  
Sate musing; on that hill the Bard would  
rove, 5  
Not mute, where now the linnet only  
sings:  
Thus everywhere to truth Tradition  
clings,  
Or Fancy localises Powers we love.  
Were only History licensed to take note  
Of things gone by, her meagre monu-  
ments 10  
Would ill suffice for persons and events:  
There is an ampler page for man to quote,  
A readier book of manifold contents,  
Studied alike in palace and in cot.

XXIV.

COUNTESS' PILLAR.

On the roadside between Penrith and Appleby,  
there stands a pillar with the following inscrip-  
tion:—  
"This pillar was erected, in the year 1656, by  
Anne Countess Dowager of Pembroke, &c. for  
a memorial of her last parting with her pious  
mother, Margaret Countess Dowager of Cum-  
berland, on the 2d of April, 1616; in memory  
whereof she hath left an annuity of £4 to be dis-  
tributed to the poor of the parish of Brougham,  
every 2d day of April for ever, upon the stone  
table placed hard by. Laus Deo!"  
WHILE the Poor gather round, till the  
end of time  
May this bright flower of Charity display  
Its bloom, unfolding at the appointed day;  
Flower than the loveliest of the vernal  
prime  
Lovelier—transplanted from heaven's  
purest clime! 5  
"Charity never faileth:" on that creed,  
More than on written testament or deed,  
The pious Lady built with hope sublime.

Alms on this stone to be dealt out, *for ever!*

"LAUS DEO." Many a Stranger passing  
by 10

Has with that Parting mixed a filial sigh,  
Blest its humane Memorial's fond endeavour;

And, fastening on those lines an eye tear-glazed,

Has ended, though no Clerk, with "God be praised!"

## XXV.

## ROMAN ANTIQUITIES.

(From the Roman Station at Old Penrith.)

How profitless the relics that we cull,  
Troubling the last holds of ambitious Rome,

Unless they chasten fancies that presume  
Too high, or idle agitations lull!

Of the world's flatteries if the brain be full, 5

To have no seat for thought were better doom,

Like this old helmet, or the eyeless skull  
Of him who gloried in its nodding plume.  
Heaven out of view, our wishes what are they?

Our fond regrets tenacious in their grasp?  
The Sage's theory? the Poet's lay?— 11

Mere Fibulæ without a robe to clasp;  
Obsolete lamps, whose light no time recalls;

Urns without ashes, tearless lacrymals!

## XXVI.

## APOLOGY,

FOR THE FOREGOING POEMS.

No more: the end is sudden and abrupt,  
Abrupt—as without preconceived design  
Was the beginning; yet the several Lays  
Have moved in order, to each other bound  
By a continuous and acknowledged tie 5  
Though unapparent—like those Shapes distinct

That yet survive ensculptured on the walls

Of palaces, or temples, 'mid the wreck  
Of famed Persepolis; each following each,

As might beseech a stately embassy, 10  
In set array; these bearing in their hands

Ensign of civil power, weapon of war,  
Or gift to be presented at the throne

Of the Great King; and others, as they go

In priestly vest, with holy offerings charged, 15

Or leading victims drest for sacrifice.  
Nor will the Power we serve, that sacred Power,

The Spirit of humanity, disdain  
A ministration humble but sincere,

That from a threshold loved by every Muse 20

Its impulse took—that sorrow-stricken door,

Whence, as a current from its fountain-head,

Our thoughts have issued, and our feelings flowed,

Receiving, willingly or not, fresh strength  
From kindred sources; while around us sighed 25

(Life's three first seasons having passed away)

Leaf-scattering winds; and hoar-frost sprinklings fell

(Foretaste of winter) on the moorland heights;

And every day brought with it tidings new

Of rash change, ominous for the public weal. 30

Hence, if dejection has too oft encroached  
Upon that sweet and tender melancholy

Which may itself be cherished and caressed

More than enough; a fault so natural  
(Even with the young, the hopeful, or the gay) 35

For prompt forgiveness will not sue in vain.

# The White Doe of Rylstone;

OR,

## The Fate of the Nortons.

[Composed 1807-1808.—Published 1815 (4to); collective ed. 1829.]

### ADVERTISEMENT.

During the Summer of 1807 I visited, for the first time, the beautiful country that surrounds Bolton Priory in Yorkshire; and the Poem of "The White Doe," founded upon a Tradition connected with that place, was composed at the close of the same year.

#### DEDICATION.

IN trellised shed with clustering roses gay,  
And, MARY! oft beside our blazing fire,  
When years of wedded life were as a day  
Whose current answers to the heart's desire,  
Did we together read in Spenser's Lay  
How Una, sad of soul—in sad attire,  
The gentle Una, of celestial birth,  
To seek her Knight went wandering o'er the earth.

Ah, then, Belovèd! pleasing was the smart,  
And the tear precious in compassion shed  
For Her, who, pierced by sorrow's thrilling  
dart,  
Did meekly bear the pang unmerited;  
Meek as that emblem of her lowly heart  
The milk-white Lamb which in a line she led,—  
And faithful, loyal in her innocence,  
Like the brave Lion slain in her defence.

Notes could we hear as of a faery shell  
Attuned to words with sacred wisdom fraught;  
Free Fancy prized each specious miracle,  
And all its finer inspiration caught;  
Till in the bosom of our rustic Cell  
We by a lamentable change were taught  
That "bliss with mortal Man may not abide:"  
How nearly joy and sorrow are allied!

For us the stream of fiction ceased to flow,  
For us the voice of melody was mute.  
—But, as soft gales dissolve the dreary snow,  
And give the timid herbage leave to shoot,  
Heaven's breathing influence failed not to be-  
stow  
A timely promise of unlooked-for fruit,  
Fair fruit of pleasure and serene content  
From blossoms wild of fancies innocent.

It soothed us—it beguiled us—then, to hear  
Once more of troubles wrought by magic spell;  
And griefs whose aery motion comes not near  
The pangs that tempt the Spirit to rebel:  
Then, with mild Una in her sober cheer,  
High over hill and low adown the dell  
Again we wandered, willing to partake  
All that she suffered for her dear Lord's sake.

Then, too, this Song of mine once more could  
please,

Where anguish, strange as dreams of restless sleep,  
Is tempered and allayed by sympathies  
Aloft ascending, and descending deep,  
Even to the inferior Kinds; whom forest-trees  
Protect from beating sunbeams, and the sweep  
Of the sharp winds;—fair Creatures!—to whom  
Heaven

A calm and sinless life, with love, hath given.

This tragic Story cheered us; for it speaks  
Of female patience winning firm repose;  
And, of the recompense that conscience seeks,  
A bright, encouraging, example shows;  
Needful when o'er wide realms the tempest breaks,  
Needful amid life's ordinary woes;—  
Hence not for them unfitted who would bless  
A happy hour with holier happiness.

He serves the Muses erringly and ill,  
Whose aim is pleasure light and fugitive:  
O, that my mind were equal to fulfil  
The comprehensive mandate which they give—  
Vain aspiration of an earnest will!  
Yet in this moral Strain a power may live,  
Belovèd Wife? such solace to impart  
As it hath yielded to thy tender heart.

RYDAL MOUNT, WESTMORELAND,  
April 20, 1815.

"Action is transitory—a step, a blow,  
The motion of a muscle—this way or that—  
'Tis done; and in the after-vacancy  
We wonder at ourselves like men betrayed:  
Suffering is permanent, obscure and dark,  
And has the nature of infinity<sup>1</sup>.  
Yet through that darkness (infinite though it seem  
And irremovable) gracious openings lie,  
By which the soul—with patient steps of thought  
Now toiling, wafted now on wings of prayer—  
May pass in hope, and, though from mortal bonds  
Yet undelivered, rise with sure ascent  
Even to the fountain-head of peace divine."

"They that deny a God destroy Man's nobility:  
for certainly Man is of kin to the Beast by his  
Body, and if he be not of kin to God by his Spirit,  
he is a base ignoble Creature. It destroys like-  
wise Magnanimity, and the raising of humane Na-  
ture: for take an example of a Dog, and mark  
what a generosity and courage he will put on,  
when he finds himself maintained by a Man, who  
to him is instead of a God, or Mellor Natura.  
Which courage is manifestly such as that Crea-  
ture without that confidence of a better Nature  
than his own could never attain. So Man, when  
he resteth and assureth himself upon Divine pro-  
tection and favour, gathereth a force and faith  
which human Nature in itself could not obtain."

LORD BACON.

### Canto First.

FROM Bolton's old monastic tower  
The bells ring loud with gladsome power;  
The sun shines bright; the fields are gay  
With people in their best array  
Of stole and doublet, hood and scarf, 5  
Along the banks of crystal Wharf,  
Through the Vale retired and lowly,  
Trooping to that summons holy.  
And, up among the moorlands, see  
What sprinklings of blithe company! 10  
Of lasses and of shepherd grooms,  
That down the steep hills force their way,  
Like cattle through the budded brooms;  
Path, or no path, what care they?  
And thus in joyous mood they hie 15  
To Bolton's mouldering Priory.

<sup>1</sup> These six lines ("Action is transitory . . . infinity") are quoted from the Tragedy of *The Borderers*, Act III., Scene v. (ll. 1539-1544). The entire passage ("Action . . . divine") was added in 1887.—Ed.

What would they there?—full fifty  
years  
That sumptuous Pile, with all its peers,  
Too harshly hath been doomed to taste  
The bitterness of wrong and waste: 20  
Its courts are ravaged; but the tower  
Is standing with a voice of power,  
That ancient voice which wont to call  
To mass or some high festival;  
And in the shattered fabric's heart 25  
Remaineth one protected part;  
A Chapel, like a wild-bird's nest,  
Closely embowered and trimly drest;  
And thither young and old repair,  
This Sabbath-day, for praise and prayer.

Fast the churchyard fills;—anon 31  
Look again, and they all are gone;  
The cluster round the porch, and the  
folk  
Who sate in the shade of the Prior's  
Oak!  
And scarcely have they disappeared 35  
Ere the prelude hymn is heard:—  
With one consent the people rejoice,  
Filling the church with a lofty voice!  
They sing a service which they feel:  
For 'tis the sunrise now of zeal; 40  
Of a pure faith the vernal prime—  
In great Eliza's golden time.

A moment ends the fervent din,  
And all is hushed, without and within;  
For though the priest, more tranquilly,  
Recites the holy liturgy, 46  
The only voice which you can hear  
Is the river murmuring near.  
—When soft!—the dusky trees between,  
And down the path through the open  
green, 50  
Where is no living thing to be seen;  
And through yon gateway, where is  
found,  
Beneath the arch with ivy bound,  
Free entrance to the churchyard ground—  
Comes gliding in with lovely gleam, 55  
Comes gliding in serene and slow,  
Soft and silent as a dream,  
A solitary Doe!  
White she is as lily of June,  
And beauteous as the silver moon 60

When out of sight the clouds are driven  
And she is left alone in heaven;  
Or like a ship some gentle day  
In sunshine sailing far away,  
A glittering ship, that hath the plain 65  
Of ocean for her own domain.

Lie silent in your graves, ye dead !  
Lie quiet in your churchyard bed !  
Ye living, tend your holy cares ;  
Ye multitude, pursue your prayers ; 70  
And blame not me if my heart and sight  
Are occupied with one delight !  
'Tis a work for sabbath hours  
If I with this bright Creature go :  
Whether she be of forest bowers, 75  
From the bowers of earth below ;  
Or a Spirit for one day given,  
A pledge of grace from purest heaven.

What harmonious pensive changes  
Wait upon her as she ranges 80  
Round and through this Pile of state  
Overthrown and desolate !  
Now a step or two her way  
Leads through space of open day,  
Where the enamoured sunny light  
Brightens her that was so bright ;  
Now doth a delicate shadow fall,  
Falls upon her like a breath,  
From some lofty arch or wall,  
As she passes underneath : 90  
Now some gloomy nook partakes  
Of the glory that she makes,—  
High-ribbed vault of stone, or cell,  
With perfect cunning framed as well  
Of stone, and ivy, and the spread 95  
Of the elder's bushy head ;  
Some jealous and forbidding cell,  
That doth the living stars repel,  
And where no flower hath leave to dwell.

The presence of this wandering Doe 100  
Fills many a damp obscure recess  
With lustre of a saintly show ;  
And, reappearing, she no less  
Sheds on the flowers that round her blow  
A more than sunny liveliness. 105  
But say, among these holy places,  
Which thus assiduously she paces,  
Comes she with a votary's task,  
Rite to perform, or boon to ask ?

Fair Pilgrim ! harbours she a sense 110  
Of sorrow, or of reverence ?  
Can she be grieved for quire or shrine,  
Crushed as if by wrath divine ?  
For what survives of house where God  
Was worshipped, or where Man abode ;  
For old magnificence undone ; 116  
Or for the gentler work begun  
By Nature, softening and concealing,  
And busy with a hand of healing ?  
Mourns she for lordly chamber's hearth  
That to the sapling ash gives birth ; 121  
For dormitory's length laid bare  
Where the wild rose blossoms fair ;  
Or altar, whence the cross was rent,  
Now rich with mossy ornament ? 125  
—She sees a warrior carved in stone,  
Among the thick weeds, stretched alone ;  
A warrior, with his shield of pride  
Cleaving humbly to his side,  
And hands in resignation prest, 130  
Palm to palm, on his tranquil breast ;  
As little she regards the sight  
As a common creature might :  
If she be doomed to inward care,  
Or service, it must lie elsewhere. 135  
—But hers are eyes serenely bright,  
And on she moves—with pace how light !  
Nor spares to stoop her head, and taste  
The dewy turf with flowers bestrown ;  
And thus she fares, until at last 140  
Beside the ridge of a grassy grave  
In quietness she lays her down ;  
Gentle as a weary wave  
Sinks, when the summer breeze hath died,  
Against an anchored vessel's side ; 145  
Even so, without distress, doth she  
Lie down in peace, and lovingly.

The day is placid in its going,  
To a lingering motion bound,  
Like the crystal stream now flowing 150  
With its softest summer sound :  
So the balmy minutes pass,  
While this radiant Creature lies  
Couched upon the dewy grass,  
Pensively with downcast eyes. 155  
—But now again the people raise  
With awful cheer a voice of praise ;  
It is the last, the parting song ;  
And from the temple forth they throng,

And quickly spread themselves abroad,  
While each pursues his several road. 161  
But some—a variegated band  
Of middle-aged, and old, and young,  
And little children by the hand  
Upon their leading mothers hung— 165  
With mute obeisance gladly paid  
Turn towards the spot where, full in view,  
The white Doe, to her service true,  
Her sabbath couch has made.

It was a solitary mound; 170  
Which two spears' length of level ground  
Did from all other graves divide:  
As if in some respect of pride;  
Or melancholy's sickly mood,  
Still shy of human neighbourhood; 175  
Or guilt, that humbly would express  
A penitential loneliness.

"Look, there she is, my Child! draw  
near;  
She fears not, wherefore should we fear?  
She means no harm;"—but still the Boy,  
To whom the words were softly said, 181  
Hung back, and smiled, and blushed for  
joy,  
A shame-faced blush of glowing red!  
Again the Mother whispered low,  
"Now you have seen the famous Doe; 185  
From Rylstone she hath found her way  
Over the hills this sabbath day;  
Her work, whate'er it be, is done,  
And she will depart when we are gone;  
Thus doth she keep, from year to year,  
Her sabbath morning, foul or fair." 191

Bright was the Creature, as in dreams  
The Boy had seen her, yea, more bright;  
But is she truly what she seems?  
He asks with insecure delight, 195  
Asks of himself, and doubts,—and still  
The doubt returns against his will:  
Though he, and all the standers-by,  
Could tell a tragic history  
Of facts divulged, wherein appear 200  
Substantial motive, reason clear,  
Why thus the milk-white Doe is found  
Couchant beside that lonely mound;  
And why she duly loves to pace  
The circuit of this hallowed place. 205

Nor to the Child's enquiring mind  
Is such perplexity confined:  
For, spite of sober Truth that sees  
A world of fixed remembrances  
Which to this mystery belong, 210  
If, undeceived, my skill can trace  
The characters of every face,  
There lack not strange delusion here,  
Conjecture vague, and idle fear,  
And superstitious fancies strong, 215  
Which do the gentle Creature wrong.

That bearded, staff-supported Sire—  
Who in his boyhood often fed  
Full cheerily on convent-bread  
And heard old tales by the convent-fire,  
And to his grave will go with scars, 221  
Relics of long and distant wars—  
That Old Man, studious to expound  
The spectacle, is mounting high  
To days of dim antiquity; 225  
When Lady Aëliza mourned  
Her Son, and felt in her despair  
The pang of unavailing prayer;  
Her Son in Wharf's abysses drowned,  
The noble Boy of Egremound. 230  
From which affliction—when the grace  
Of God had in her heart found place—  
A pious structure, fair to see,  
Rose up, this stately Priory!  
The Lady's work;—but now laid low;  
To the grief of her soul that doth come  
and go, 236  
In the beautiful form of this innocent  
Doe:  
Which, though seemingly doomed in its  
breast to sustain  
A softened remembrance of sorrow and  
pain,  
Is spotless, and holy, and gentle, and  
bright; 240  
And glides o'er the earth like an angel of  
light.

Pass, pass who will, yon chantry  
door;  
And through the chink in the fractured  
floor  
Look down, and see a griesly sight;  
A vault where the bodies are buried  
upright! 245

There, face by face, and hand by hand,  
The Claphams and Mauleverers stand;  
And, in his place, among son and sire,  
Is John de Clapham, that fierce Esquire,  
A valiant man, and a name of dread 250  
In the ruthless wars of the White and  
Red;

Who dragged Earl Pembroke from Ban-  
bury church

And smote off his head on the stones of  
the porch!

Look down among them, if you dare;  
Oft does the White Doe loiter there, 255  
Prying into the darksome rent;

Nor can it be with good intent:  
So thinks that Dame of haughty air,  
Who hath a Page her book to hold,  
And wears a frontlet edged with gold. 260  
Harsh thoughts with her high mood  
agree—

Who counts among her ancestry  
Earl Pembroke, slain so impiously!

That slender Youth, a scholar pale,  
From Oxford come to his native vale, 265  
He also hath his own conceit:

It is, thinks he, the gracious Fairy,  
Who loved the Shepherd-lord to meet  
In his wanderings solitary:

Wild notes she in his hearing sang, 270  
A song of Nature's hidden powers;

That whistled like the wind, and rang  
Among the rocks and holly bowers.

'Twas said that She all shapes could  
wear;

And oftentimes before him stood, 275  
Amid the trees of some thick wood,

In semblance of a lady fair;  
And taught him signs, and showed him

sights,  
In Craven's dens, on Cumbrian heights;

When under cloud of fear he lay, 280  
A shepherd clad in homely grey;

Nor left him at his later day.  
And hence when he, with spear and

shield,  
Rode full of years to Flodden-field,

His eye could see the hidden spring, 285  
And how the current was to flow;

The fatal end of Scotland's King,  
And all that hopeless overthrow.

But not in wars did he delight,  
This Clifford wished for worthier might;  
Nor in broad pomp, or courtly state; 291  
Him his own thoughts did elevate,—  
Most happy in the shy recess

Of Barden's lowly quietness.

And choice of studious friends had he 295  
Of Bolton's dear fraternity;

Who, standing on this old church tower,  
In many a calm propitious hour,

Perused, with him, the starry sky;  
Or, in their cells, with him did pry 300  
For other lore,—by keen desire

Urged to close toil with chemic fire;  
In quest belike of transmutations

Rich as the mine's most bright creations.  
But they and their good works are fled,

And all is now disquieted— 306  
And peace is none, for living or dead!

Ah, pensive Scholar, think not so,  
But look again at the radiant Doe!

What quiet watch she seems to keep, 310  
Alone, beside that grassy heap!

Why mention other thoughts unmeet  
For vision so composed and sweet?

While stand the people in a ring,  
Gazing, doubting, questioning; 315  
Yea, many overcome in spite

Of recollections clear and bright;  
Which yet do unto some impart

An undisturbed repose of heart.  
And all the assembly own a law 320  
Of orderly respect and awe;

But see—they vanish one by one,  
And last, the Doe herself is gone.

Harp! we have been full long beguiled  
By vague thoughts, lured by fancies

wild; 325  
To which, with no reluctant strings,

Thou hast attuned thy murmurings;  
And now before this Pile we stand

In solitude, and utter peace:  
But, Harp! thy murmurs may not cease—

A Spirit, with his angelic wings, 331  
In soft and breeze-like visitings,

Has touched thee—and a Spirit's hand:  
A voice is with us—a command

To chant, in strains of heavenly glory, 335  
A tale of tears, a mortal story!

## Canto Second.

THE Harp in lowliness obeyed ;  
 And first we sang of the greenwood shade  
 And a solitary Maid ;  
 Beginning, where the song must end, 340  
 With her, and with her sylvan Friend ;  
 The Friend, who stood before her sight,  
 Her only unextinguished light ;  
 Her last companion in a dearth  
 Of love, upon a hopeless earth. 345

For She it was—this Maid, who wrought  
 Meekly, with foreboding thought,  
 In vermeil colours and in gold  
 An unblest work ; which, standing by,  
 Her Father did with joy behold,— 350  
 Exulting in its imagery ;  
 A Banner, fashioned to fulfil  
 Too perfectly his headstrong will :  
 For on this Banner had her hand 354  
 Embroidered (such her Sire's command)  
 The sacred Cross ; and figured there  
 The five dear wounds our Lord did bear ;  
 Full soon to be uplifted high,  
 And float in rueful company !

It was the time when England's Queen  
 Twelve years had reigned, a Sovereign  
 dread ; 361  
 Nor yet the restless crown had been  
 Disturbed upon her virgin head ;  
 But now the inly-working North  
 Was ripe to send its thousands forth, 365  
 A potent vassalage, to fight  
 In Percy's and in Neville's right,  
 Two Earls fast leagued in discontent,  
 Who gave their wishes open vent ;  
 And boldly urged a general plea, 370  
 The rites of ancient piety  
 To be triumphantly restored,  
 By the stern justice of the sword !  
 And that same Banner, on whose breast  
 The blameless Lady had exprest 375  
 Memorials chosen to give life  
 And sunshine to a dangerous strife ;  
 That Banner, waiting for the Call,  
 Stood quietly in Rylstone-hall.

It came ; and Francis Norton said, 380  
 " O Father ! rise not in this fray—  
 The hairs are white upon your head ;

Dear Father, hear me when I say  
 It is for you too late a day !  
 Bethink you of your own good name : 385  
 A just and gracious Queen have we,  
 A pure religion, and the claim  
 Of peace on our humanity.—  
 'Tis meet that I endure your scorn ;  
 I am your son, your eldest born ; 390  
 But not for lordship or for land,  
 My Father, do I clasp your knees ;  
 The Banner touch not, stay your hand,  
 This multitude of men disband,  
 And live at home in blameless ease ; 395  
 For these my brethren's sake, for me ;  
 And, most of all, for Emily ! "

Tumultuous noises filled the hall ;  
 And scarcely could the Father hear  
 That name—pronounced with a dying  
 fall— 400  
 The name of his only Daughter dear,  
 As on the banner which stood near  
 He glanced a look of holy pride,  
 And his moist eyes were glorified ;  
 Then did he seize the staff, and say : 405  
 " Thou, Richard, bear'st thy father's name,  
 Keep thou this ensign till the day  
 When I of thee require the same :  
 Thy place be on my better hand ;—  
 And seven as true as thou, I see, 410  
 Will cleave to this good cause and me."  
 He spake, and eight brave sons straight-  
 way  
 All followed him, a gallant band !

Thus, with his sons, when forth he came  
 The sight was hailed with loud acclaim  
 And din of arms and minstrelsy, 416  
 From all his warlike tenantry,  
 All horsed and harnessed with him to  
 ride,—  
 A voice to which the hills replied !

But Francis, in the vacant hall, 420  
 Stood silent under dreary weight,—  
 A phantasm, in which roof and wall  
 Shook, tottered, swam before his sight ;  
 A phantasm like a dream of night !  
 Thus overwhelmed, and desolate, 425  
 He found his way to a postern-gate ;  
 And, when he waked, his languid eye  
 Was on the calm and silent sky ;

With air about him breathing sweet, 429  
 And earth's green grass beneath his feet;  
 Nor did he fail ere long to hear  
 A sound of military cheer,  
 Faint—but it reached that sheltered spot;  
 He heard, and it disturbed him not.

There stood he, leaning on a lance 435  
 Which he had grasped unknowingly,  
 Had blindly grasped in that strong trance,  
 That dimness of heart-agony;  
 There stood he, cleansed from the despair  
 And sorrow of his fruitless prayer. 440  
 The past he calmly hath reviewed:  
 But where will be the fortitude  
 Of this brave man, when he shall see  
 That Form beneath the spreading tree,  
 And know that it is Emily? 445

He saw her where in open view  
 She sate beneath the spreading yew—  
 Her head upon her lap, concealing  
 In solitude her bitter feeling:  
 "Might ever son command a sire, 450  
 The act were justified to-day."  
 This to himself—and to the Maid,  
 Whom now he had approached, he said—  
 "Gone are they,—they have their desire;  
 And I with thee one hour will stay, 455  
 To give thee comfort if I may."

She heard, but looked not up, nor spake;  
 And sorrow moved him to partake  
 Her silence; then his thoughts turned  
 round,  
 And fervent words a passage found. 460

"Gone are they, bravely, though misled;  
 With a dear Father at their head!  
 The Sons obey a natural lord;  
 The Father had given solemn word  
 To noble Percy; and a force 465  
 Still stronger, bends him to his course.  
 This said, our tears to-day may fall  
 As at an innocent funeral.  
 In deep and awful channel runs  
 This sympathy of Sire and Sons; 470  
 Untried our Brothers have been loved  
 With heart by simple nature moved;  
 And now their faithfulness is proved:  
 For faithful we must call them, bearing  
 That soul of conscientious daring. 475

—There were they all in circle—there  
 Stood Richard, Ambrose, Christopher,  
 John with a sword that will not fail,  
 And Marmaduke in fearless mail,  
 And those bright Twins were side by side;  
 And there, by fresh hopes beautified, 481  
 Stood He, whose arm yet lacks the power  
 Of man, our youngest, fairest flower!  
 I, by the right of eldest born,  
 And in a second father's place, 485  
 Presumed to grapple with their scorn,  
 And meet their pity face to face;  
 Yea, trusting in God's holy aid,  
 I to my Father knelt and prayed;  
 And one, the pensive Marmaduke, 490  
 Methought, was yielding inwardly,  
 And would have laid his purpose by,  
 But for a glance of his Father's eye,  
 Which I myself could scarcely brook.

"Then be we, each and all, forgiven! 495  
 Thou, chiefly thou, my Sister dear,  
 Whose pangs are registered in heaven—  
 The stifled sigh, the hidden tear,  
 And smiles, that dared to take their place,  
 Meek filial smiles, upon thy face, 500  
 As that unhallowed Banner grew  
 Beneath a loving old Man's view.  
 Thy part is done—thy painful part;  
 Be thou then satisfied in heart!  
 A further, though far easier, task 505  
 Than thine hath been, my duties ask;  
 With theirs my efforts cannot blend,  
 I cannot for such cause contend;  
 Their aims I utterly forswear;  
 But I in body will be there. 510  
 Unarmed and naked will I go,  
 Be at their side, come weal or woe:  
 On kind occasions I may wait,  
 See, hear, obstruct, or mitigate.  
 Bare breast I take and an empty  
 hand<sup>1</sup>."— 515  
 Therewith he threw away the lance,  
 Which he had grasped in that strong  
 trance;  
 Spurned it, like something that would  
 stand  
 Between him and the pure intent  
 Of love on which his soul was bent. 520

<sup>1</sup> See the Old Ballad,—*"The Rising of the North."*

"For thee, for thee, is left the sense  
 Of trial past without offence  
 To God or man; such innocence,  
 Such consolation, and the excess  
 Of an unmerited distress; 525  
 In that thy very strength must lie.  
 —O Sister, I could prophesy!  
 The time is come that rings the knell  
 Of all we loved, and loved so well:  
 Hope nothing, if I thus may speak 530  
 To thee, a woman, and thence weak:  
 Hope nothing, I repeat; for we  
 Are doomed to perish utterly:  
 'Tis meet that thou with me divide  
 The thought while I am by thy side, 535  
 Acknowledging a grace in this,  
 A comfort in the dark abyss.  
 But look not for me when I am gone,  
 And be no farther wrought upon:  
 Farewell all wishes, all debate, 540  
 All prayers for this cause, or for that!  
 Weep, if that aid thee; but depend  
 Upon no help of outward friend;  
 Espouse thy doom at once, and cleave  
 To fortitude without reprieve. 545  
 For we must fall, both we and ours—  
 This Mansion and these pleasant bowers,  
 Walks, pools, and arbours, homestead,  
 hall—  
 Our fate is theirs, will reach them all;  
 The young horse must forsake his manger,  
 And learn to glory in a Stranger; 551  
 The hawk forget his perch; the hound  
 Be parted from his ancient ground:  
 The blast will sweep us all away—  
 One desolation, one decay! 555  
 And even this Creature!" which words  
 saying,  
 He pointed to a lovely Doe,  
 A few steps distant, feeding, straying;  
 Fair creature, and more white than snow!  
 "Even she will to her peaceful woods 560  
 Return, and to her murmuring floods,  
 And be in heart and soul the same  
 She was before she hither came;  
 Ere she had learned to love us all,  
 Herself beloved in Rylstone-hall. 565  
 —But thou, my Sister, doomed to be  
 The last leaf on a blasted tree;  
 If not in vain we breathed the breath  
 Together of a purer faith;

If hand in hand we have been led, 570  
 And thou, (O happy thought this day!)  
 Not seldom foremost in the way;  
 If on one thought our minds have fed,  
 And we have in one meaning read;  
 If, when at home our private weal 575  
 Hath suffered from the shock of zeal,  
 Together we have learned to prize  
 Forbearance and self-sacrifice;  
 If we like combatants have fared,  
 And for this issue been prepared; 580  
 If thou art beautiful, and youth  
 And thought endue thee with all truth—  
 Be strong;—be worthy of the grace  
 Of God, and fill thy destined place:  
 A Soul, by force of sorrows high, 585  
 Uplifted to the purest sky  
 Of undisturbed humanity!"

He ended,—or she heard no more;  
 He led her from the yew-tree shade,  
 And at the mansion's silent door, 590  
 He kissed the consecrated Maid;  
 And down the valley then pursued,  
 Alone, the armed Multitude.

### Canto Third.

Now joy for you who from the towers  
 Of Brancepeth look in doubt and fear, 595  
 Telling melancholy hours!  
 Proclaim it, let your Masters hear  
 That Norton with his band is near!  
 The watchmen from their station high  
 Pronounced the word,—and the Earls  
 descry, 600  
 Well-pleased, the armed Company  
 Marching down the banks of Were.

Said fearless Norton to the pair  
 Gone forth to greet him on the plain—  
 "This meeting, noble Lords! looks fair,  
 I bring with me a goodly train; 605  
 Their hearts are with you: hill and dale  
 Have helped us: Urs we crossed, and  
 Swale,  
 And horse and harness followed—see  
 The best part of their Yeomanry! 610  
 —Stand forth, my Sons!—these eight are  
 mine,  
 Whom to this service I commend;

Which way so'er our fate incline,  
 These will be faithful to the end ; 614  
 They are my all—"voice failed him here—  
 "My all save one, a Daughter dear !  
 Whom I have left, Love's mildest birth,  
 The meekest Child on this blessed earth.  
 I had—but these are by my side,  
 These Eight, and this is a day of pride !  
 The time is ripe. With festive din 621  
 Lo ! how the people are flocking in,—  
 Like hungry fowl to the feeder's hand  
 When snow lies heavy upon the land."

He spake bare truth ; for far and near  
 From every side came noisy swarms 626  
 Of Peasants in their homely gear ;  
 And, mixed with these, to Brancepeth  
 came

Grave Gentry of estate and name,  
 And Captains known for worth in arms ;  
 And prayed the Earls in self-defence 631  
 To rise, and prove their innocence.—  
 "Rise, noble Earls, put forth your might  
 For holy Church, and the People's right !"

The Norton fixed, at this demand, 635  
 His eye upon Northumberland,  
 And said ; "The Minds of Men will own  
 No loyal rest while England's Crown  
 Remains without an Heir, the bait  
 Of strife and factions desperate ; 640  
 Who, paying deadly hate in kind  
 Through all things else, in this can find  
 A mutual hope, a common mind ;  
 And plot, and pant to overwhelm  
 All ancient honour in the realm. 645  
 —Brave Earls ! to whose heroic veins  
 Our noblest blood is given in trust,  
 To you a suffering State complains,  
 And ye must raise her from the dust.  
 With wishes of still bolder scope 650  
 On you we look, with dearest hope ;  
 Even for our Altars—for the prize  
 In Heaven, of life that never dies ;  
 For the old and holy Church we mourn,  
 And must in joy to her return. 655  
 Behold !" —and from his Son whose stand  
 Was on his right, from that guardian  
 hand

He took the Banner, and unfurled  
 The precious folds—"behold," said he,  
 "The ransom of a sinful world ; 660

Let this your preservation be ;  
 The wounds of hands and feet and side,  
 And the sacred Cross on which Jesus died.  
 —This bring I from an ancient hearth,  
 These Records wrought in pledge of love  
 By hands of no ignoble birth, 666  
 A Maid o'er whom the blessed Dove  
 Vouchsafed in gentleness to brood  
 While she the holy work pursued."  
 "Uplift the Standard !" was the cry 670  
 From all the listeners that stood round,  
 "Plant it,—by this we live or die."  
 The Norton ceased not for that sound.  
 But said ; "The prayer which ye have  
 heard,

Much injured Earls ! by these preferred,  
 Is offered to the Saints, the sigh 676  
 Of tens of thousands, secretly."  
 "Uplift it !" cried once more the Band,  
 And then a thoughtful pause ensued :  
 "Uplift it !" said Northumberland— 680  
 Whereat from all the multitude  
 Who saw the Banner reared on high  
 In all its dread emblazonry  
 A voice of uttermost joy brake out :  
 The transport was rolled down the river  
 of Were, 685  
 And Durham, the time-honoured Durham,  
 did hear,  
 And the towers of Saint Cuthbert were  
 stirred by the shout !

Now was the North in arms :—they  
 shine  
 In warlike trim from Tweed to Tyne,  
 At Percy's voice : and Neville sees 690  
 His Followers gathering in from Tees,  
 From Were, and all the little rills  
 Concealed among the forked hills—  
 Seven hundred Knights, Retainers all  
 Of Neville, at their Master's call 695  
 Had sate together in Raby Hall !  
 Such strength that Earldom held of yore ;  
 Nor wanted at this time rich store  
 Of well-appointed chivalry.  
 —Not loth the sleepy lance to wield, 700  
 And greet the old paternal shield,  
 They heard the summons ;—and, further-  
 more,  
 Horsemen and Foot of each degree,  
 Unbound by pledge of fealty,

Appeared, with free and open hate 705  
 Of novelties in Church and State;  
 Knight, burgher, yeoman, and esquire,  
 And Romish priest, in priest's attire.  
 And thus, in arms, a zealous Band  
 Proceeding under joint command, 710  
 To Durham first their course they bear;  
 And in Saint Cuthbert's ancient seat  
 Sang mass,—and tore the book of prayer,—  
 And trod the bible beneath their feet.

Thence marching southward smooth  
 and free 715

“They mustered their host at Wetherby,  
 Full sixteen thousand fair to see<sup>1</sup>;”  
 The Choicest Warriors of the North!  
 But none for beauty and for worth  
 Like those eight Sons—who, in a ring, 720  
 (Ripe men, or blooming in life's spring)  
 Each with a lance, erect and tall,  
 A falchion, and a buckler small,  
 Stood by their Sire, on Clifford-moor,  
 To guard the Standard which he bore. 725  
 On foot they girt their Father round;  
 And so will keep the appointed ground'  
 Where'er their march: no steed will he  
 Henceforth bestride;—triumphantly  
 He stands upon the grassy sod, 730  
 Trusting himself to the earth, and God.  
 Rare sight to embolden and inspire!  
 Proud was the field of Sons and Sire;  
 Of him the most; and, sooth to say,  
 No shape of man in all the array 735  
 So graced the sunshine of that day.  
 The monumental pomp of age  
 Was with this goodly Personage;  
 A stature undepressed in size,  
 Unbent, which rather seemed to rise, 740  
 In open victory o'er the weight  
 Of seventy years, to loftier height;  
 Magnific limbs of withered state;  
 A face to fear and venerate; 744  
 Eyes dark and strong; and on his head  
 Bright locks of silver hair, thick spread,  
 Which a brown morion half-concealed,  
 Light as a hunter's of the field;  
 And thus, with girdle round his waist,  
 Whereon the Banner-staff might rest 750  
 At need, he stood, advancing high  
 The glittering, floating Pageantry.

Who sees him?—thousands see, and One  
 With unparticipated gaze;  
 Who, 'mong those thousands, friend hath  
 none, 755

And treads in solitary ways.  
 He, following wheresoe'er he might,  
 Hath watched the Banner from afar,  
 As shepherds watch a lonely star,  
 Or mariners the distant light 760  
 That guides them through a stormy  
 night.

And now, upon a chosen plot  
 Of rising ground, yon heathy spot!  
 He takes alone his far-off stand,  
 With breast unarmed, unweaponed hand.  
 Bold is his aspect; but his eye  
 Is pregnant with anxiety,  
 While, like a tutelary Power,  
 He there stands fixed from hour to  
 hour:

Yet sometimes in more humble guise 770  
 Upon the turf-clad height he lies  
 Stretched, herdsman-like, as if to bask  
 In sunshine were his only task,  
 Or by his mantle's help to find  
 A shelter from the nipping wind: 775  
 And thus, with short oblivion blest,  
 His weary spirits gather rest.  
 Again he lifts his eyes; and lo!  
 The pageant glancing to and fro;  
 And hope is awakened by the sight, 780  
 He thence may learn, ere fall of night,  
 Which way the tide is doomed to flow.

To London were the Chieftains bent;  
 But what avails the bold intent?  
 A Royal army is gone forth 785  
 To quell the RISING OF THE NORTH;  
 They march with Dudley at their head,  
 And, in seven days' space, will to York  
 be led!—

Can such a mighty host be raised  
 Thus suddenly, and brought so near? 790  
 The Earls upon each other gazed,  
 And Neville's cheek grew pale with fear;  
 For, with a high and valiant name,  
 He bore a heart of timid frame;  
 And bold if both had been, yet they 795  
 “Against so many may not stay<sup>2</sup>.”

<sup>1</sup> From the Old Ballad.

<sup>2</sup> From the Old Ballad.

Back therefore will they hie to seize  
A strong Hold on the banks of Tees;  
There wait a favourable hour,  
Until Lord Dacre with his power 800  
From Naworth come; and Howard's aid  
Be with them openly displayed.

While through the Host, from man to  
man,

A rumour of this purpose ran,  
The Standard trusting to the care 805  
Of him who heretofore did bear  
That charge, impatient Norton sought  
The Chieftains to unfold his thought,  
And thus abruptly spake;—"We yield  
(And can it be?) an unfought field!— 810  
How oft has strength, the strength of  
heaven,

To few triumphantly been given!  
Still do our very children boast  
Of mitred Thurston—what a Host  
He conquered!—Saw we not the Plain  
(And flying shall behold again) 816  
Where faith was proved?—while to battle  
moved

The Standard, on the Sacred Wain  
That bore it, compassed round by a bold  
Fraternity of Barons old; 820  
And with those grey-haired champions  
stood,

Under the saintly ensigns three,  
The infant Heir of Mowbray's blood—  
All confident of victory!—  
Shall Percy blush, then, for his name? 825  
Must Westmoreland be asked with shame  
Whose were the numbers, where the loss,  
In that other day of Neville's Cross?  
When the Prior of Durham with holy  
hand

Raised, as the Vision gave command, 830  
Saint Outhbert's Relic—far and near  
Kenned on the point of a lofty spear;  
While the Monks prayed in Maiden's  
Bower

To God descending in his power.  
Less would not at our need be due 835  
To us, who war against the Untrue;—  
The delegates of Heaven we rise,  
Convoked the impious to chastise:  
We, we, the sanctities of old  
Would re-establish and uphold: 840

Be warned"—His zeal the Chiefs con-  
founded,  
But word was given, and the trumpet  
sounded:

Back through the melancholy Host  
Went Norton, and resumed his post.  
Alas! thought he, and have I borne 845  
This Banner raised with joyful pride,  
This hope of all posterity,  
By those dread symbols sanctified;  
Thus to become at once the scorn  
Of babbling winds as they go by, 850  
A spot of shame to the sun's bright eye,  
To the light clouds a mockery!

—"Even these poor eight of mine would  
stem—"

Half to himself, and half to them 854  
He spake—"would stem, or quell, a force  
Ten times their number, man and horse;  
This by their own unaided might,  
Without their father in their sight,  
Without the Cause for which they fight;  
A Cause, which on a needful day 860  
Would breed us thousands brave as  
they."

—So speaking, he his reverend head  
Raised toward that Imagery once more:  
But the familiar prospect shed  
Despondency unfelt before: 865  
A shock of intimations vain,  
Dismay, and superstitious pain,  
Fell on him, with the sudden thought  
Of her by whom the work was wrought:—  
Oh! wherefore was her countenance  
bright 870

With love divine and gentle light?  
She would not, could not, disobey,  
But her Faith leaned another way.  
Ill tears she wept; I saw them fall,  
I overheard her as she spake 875  
Sad words to that mute Animal,  
The White Doe, in the hawthorn brake;  
She steeped, but not for Jesu's sake,  
This Cross in tears: by her, and One  
Unworthier far we are undone— 880  
Her recreant Brother—he prevailed  
Over that tender Spirit—assailed  
Too oft, alas! by her whose head  
In the cold grave hath long been laid:  
She first in reason's dawn beguiled 885  
Her docile, unsuspecting Child:

Far back—far back my mind must go  
To reach the well-spring of this woe !

While thus he brooded, music sweet  
Of border tunes was played to cheer 890  
The footsteps of a quick retreat ;  
But Norton lingered in the rear,  
Stung with sharp thoughts ; and, ere the  
last  
From his distracted brain was cast,  
Before his Father, Francis stood, 895  
And spake in firm and earnest mood.

“ Though here I bend a suppliant knee  
In reverence, and unarmed, I bear  
In your indignant thoughts my share ;  
Am grieved this backward march to see  
So careless and disorderly. 901  
I scorn your Chiefs—men who would lead,  
And yet want courage at their need :  
Then look at them with open eyes !  
Deserve they further sacrifice ?— 905  
If—when they shrink, nor dare oppose  
In open field their gathering foes,  
(And fast, from this decisive day,  
Yon multitude must melt away ;)  
If now I ask a grace not claimed 910  
While ground was left for hope ; unblamed  
Be an endeavour that can do  
No injury to them or you.  
My Father ! I would help to find  
A place of shelter, till the rage 915  
Of cruel men do like the wind  
Exhaust itself and sink to rest ;  
Be Brother now to Brother joined !  
Admit me in the equipage  
Of your misfortunes, that at least, 920  
Whatever fate remain behind,  
I may bear witness in my breast  
To your nobility of mind ! ”

“ Thou Enemy, my bane and blight !  
Oh ! bold to fight the Coward's fight 925  
Against all good ”—but why declare,  
At length, the issue of a prayer  
Which love had prompted, yielding scope  
Too free to one bright moment's hope ?  
Suffice it that the Son, who strove 930  
With fruitless effort to allay  
That passion, prudently gave way ;  
Nor did he turn aside to prove  
His Brothers' wisdom or their love—

But calmly from the spot withdrew ; 935  
His best endeavours to renew,  
Should e'er a kindlier time ensue.

#### Canto Fourth.

’Tis night : in silence looking down,  
The Moon from cloudless ether sees  
A Camp, and a beleaguered Town, 940  
And Castle like a stately crown  
On the steep rocks of winding Tees ;—  
And southward far, with moor between,  
Hill-top, and flood, and forest green, 944  
The bright Moon sees that valley small  
Where Rylstone's old sequestered Hall  
A venerable image yields  
Of quiet to the neighbouring fields ;  
While from one pillared chimney breathes  
The smoke, and mounts in silver wreaths.  
—The courts are hushed ;—for timely  
sleep 951  
The greyhounds to their kennel creep ;  
The peacock in the broad ash-tree  
Aloft is roosted for the night,  
He who in proud prosperity 955  
Of colours manifold and bright  
Walked round, affronting the daylight ;  
And higher still, above the bower  
Where he is perched, from yon lone  
Tower  
The hall-clock in the clear moonshine 960  
With glittering finger points at nine.

Ah ! who could think that sadness here  
Hath any sway ? or pain, or fear ?  
A soft and lulling sound is heard  
Of streams inaudible by day ; 965  
The garden pool's dark surface, stirred  
By the night insects in their play,  
Breaks into dimples small and bright ;  
A thousand, thousand rings of light  
That shape themselves and disappear 970  
Almost as soon as seen :—and lo !  
Not distant far, the milk-white Doe—  
The same who quietly was feeding  
On the green herb, and nothing heeding,  
When Francis, uttering to the Maid 975  
His last words in the yew-tree shade,  
Involved whate'er by love was brought  
Out of his heart, or crossed his thought,  
Or chance presented to his eye,  
In one sad sweep of destiny— 980

The same fair Creature, who hath found  
 Her way into forbidden ground ;  
 Where now—within this spacious plot  
 For pleasure made, a goodly spot,  
 With lawns and beds of flowers, and  
 shades 985  
 Of trellis-work in long arcades,  
 And cirque and crescent framed by wall  
 Of close-clipt foliage green and tall,  
 Converging walks, and fountains gay,  
 And terraces in trim array— 990  
 Beneath yon cypress spiring high,  
 With pine and cedar spreading wide  
 Their darksome boughs on either side,  
 In open moonlight doth she lie ;  
 Happy as others of her kind, 995  
 That, far from human neighbourhood,  
 Range unrestricted as the wind,  
 Through park, or chase, or savage wood.

But see the consecrated Maid  
 Emerging from a cedar shade 1000  
 To open moonshine, where the Doe  
 Beneath the cypress-spire is laid ;  
 Like a patch of April snow—  
 Upon a bed of herbage green,  
 Lingered in a woody glade 1005  
 Or behind a rocky screen—  
 Lonely relic ! which, if seen  
 By the shepherd, is passed by  
 With an inattentive eye.  
 Nor more regard doth She bestow 1010  
 Upon the uncomplaining Doe  
 Now couched at ease, though oft this day  
 Not unperplexed nor free from pain,  
 When she had tried, and tried in vain,  
 Approaching in her gentle way, 1015  
 To win some look of love, or gain  
 Encouragement to sport or play ;  
 Attempts which still the heart-sick Maid  
 Rejected, or with slight repaid.

Yet Emily is soothed ;—the breeze 1020  
 Came fraught with kindly sympathies.  
 As she approached yon rustic Shed  
 Hung with late-flowering woodbine,  
 spread  
 Along the walls and overhead,  
 The fragrance of the breathing flowers  
 Revived a memory of those hours 1025  
 When here, in this remote alcove,

(While from the pendent woodbine came  
 Like odours, sweet as if the same)  
 A fondly-anxious Mother strove 1030  
 To teach her salutary fears  
 And mysteries above her years.  
 Yes, she is soothed : an Image faint,  
 And yet not faint—a presence bright  
 Returns to her—that blessed Saint 1035  
 Who with mild looks and language mild  
 Instructed here her darling Child,  
 While yet a prattler on the knee,  
 To worship in simplicity  
 The invisible God, and take for guide  
 The faith reformed and purified. 1041

'Tis flown—the Vision, and the sense  
 Of that beguiling influence ;  
 “But oh ! thou Angel from above,  
 Mute Spirit of maternal love, 1045  
 That stood'st before my eyes, more clear  
 Than ghosts are fabled to appear  
 Sent upon embassies of fear ;  
 As thou thy presence hast to me  
 Vouchsafed, in radiant ministry 1050  
 Descend on Francis ; nor forbear  
 To greet him with a voice, and say ;—  
 ‘If hope be a rejected stay,  
 Do thou, my christian Son, beware  
 Of that most lamentable snare, 1055  
 The self-reliance of despair !”

Then from within the embowered retreat  
 Where she had found a grateful seat  
 Perturbed she issues. She will go !  
 Herself will follow to the war, 1060  
 And clasp her Father's knees ;—ah, no !  
 She meets the insuperable bar,  
 The injunction by her Brother laid ;  
 His parting charge—but ill obeyed—  
 That interdicted all debate, 1065  
 All prayer for this cause or for that ;  
 All efforts that would turn aside  
 The headstrong current of their fate :  
*Her duty is to stand and wait ;*  
 In resignation to abide 1070  
 The shock, AND FINALLY SECURE  
 O’ER PAIN AND GRIEF A TRIUMPH PURE.  
 —She feels it, and her pangs are checked.  
 But now, as silently she paced  
 The turf, and thought by thought was  
 chased, 1075

Came One who, with sedate respect,  
Approached, and, greeting her, thus  
spake;

"An old man's privilege I take:  
Dark is the time—a woeful day!  
Dear daughter of affliction, say 1080  
How can I serve you? point the way."

"Rights have you, and may well be  
bold:

You with my Father have grown old  
In friendship—strive—for his sake go—  
Turn from us all the coming woe: 1085  
This would I beg; but on my mind  
A passive stillness is enjoined.  
On you, if room for mortal aid  
Be left, is no restriction laid;  
You not forbidden to recline 1090  
With hope upon the Will divine."

"Hope," said the old Man, "must  
abide

With all of us, whate'er betide.  
In Craven's Wilds is many a den,  
To shelter persecuted men: 1095  
Far under ground is many a cave,  
Where they might lie as in the grave,  
Until this storm hath ceased to rave:  
Or let them cross the River Tweed,  
And be at once from peril freed!" 1100

"Ah tempt me not!" she faintly  
sighed;

"I will not counsel nor exhort,  
With my condition satisfied;  
But you, at least, may make report  
Of what befalls;—be this your task— 1105  
This may be done;—'tis all I ask!"

She spake—and from the Lady's sight  
The Sire, unconscious of his age,  
Departed promptly as a Page  
Bound on some errand of delight. 1110  
—The noble Francis—wise as brave,  
Thought he, may want not skill to save.  
With hopes in tenderness concealed,  
Unarmed he followed to the field; 1114  
Him will I seek: the insurgent Powers  
Are now besieging Barnard's Towers,—  
"Grant that the Moon which shines this  
night  
May guide them in a prudent flight!"

But quick the turns of chance and  
change,

And knowledge has a narrow range; 1120  
Whence idle fears, and needless pain,  
And wishes blind, and efforts vain.—

The Moon may shine, but cannot be  
Their guide in flight—already she  
Hath witnessed their captivity. 1125

She saw the desperate assault  
Upon that hostile castle made;—  
But dark and dismal is the vault  
Where Norton and his sons are laid!

Disastrous issue!—he had said 1130

"This night yon faithless Towers must  
yield,

Or we for ever quit the field.  
—Neville is utterly dismayed,

For promise fails of Howard's aid;  
And Dacre to our call replies 1135

That he is unprepared to rise.  
My heart is sick;—this weary pause  
Must needs be fatal to our cause.

The breach is open—on the wall,  
This night,—the Banner shall be plant-  
ed!" 1140

—'Twas done: his Sons were with him—  
all;

They belt him round with hearts un-  
daunted

And others follow;—Sire and Son  
Leap down into the court;—" 'Tis won"—  
They shout aloud—but Heaven decreed

That with their joyful shout should close  
The triumph of a desperate deed  
Which struck with terror friends and  
foes!

The friend shrinks back—the foe recoils  
From Norton and his filial band; 1150

But they, now caught within the toils,  
Against a thousand cannot stand;—  
The foe from numbers courage drew,  
And overpowered that gallant few.

"A rescue for the Standard!" cried 1155

The Father from within the walls;  
But, see, the sacred Standard falls!—  
Confusion through the Camp spread

wide:

Some fled; and some their fears detained:  
But ere the Moon had sunk to rest 1160

In her pale chambers of the west,  
Of that rash levy nought remained.

## Canto Fifth.

HIGH on a point of rugged ground  
Among the wastes of Rylstone Fell,  
Above the loftiest ridge or mound 1165  
Where foresters or shepherds dwell,  
An edifice of warlike frame  
Stands single—Norton Tower its name—  
It fronts all quarters, and looks round  
O'er path and road, and plain and dell,  
Dark moor, and gleam of pool and stream,  
Upon a prospect without bound.

The summit of this bold ascent—  
Though bleak and bare, and seldom free  
As Pendle-hill or Pennygent 1175  
From wind, or frost, or vapours wet—  
Had often heard the sound of glee  
When there the youthful Nortons met,  
To practise games and archery: 1179  
How proud and happy they! the crowd  
Of Lookers-on how pleased and proud!  
And from the scorching noon-tide sun,  
From showers, or when the prize was  
won,

They to the Tower withdrew, and there  
Would mirth run round, with generous  
fare; 1185  
And the stern old Lord of Rylstone-hall  
Was happiest, proudest, of them all!

But now, his Child, with anguish pale,  
Upon the height walks to and fro;  
'Tis well that she hath heard the tale, 1190  
Received the bitterness of woe:  
For she *had* hoped, had hoped and feared,  
Such rights did feeble nature claim;  
And oft her steps had hither steered,  
Though not unconscious of self-blame;  
For she her brother's charge revered, 1196  
His farewell words; and by the same,  
Yea, by her brother's very name,  
Had, in her solitude, been cheered. 1199

Beside the lonely watch-tower stood  
That grey-haired Man of gentle blood,  
Who with her Father had grown old  
In friendship; rival hunters they,  
And fellow warriors in their day;  
To Rylstone he the tidings brought; 1205  
Then on this height the Maid had sought,  
And, gently as he could, had told

The end of that dire Tragedy,  
Which it had been his lot to see.

To him the Lady turned; "You said  
That Francis lives, *he* is not dead?" 1211

"Your noble brother hath been spared;  
To take his life they have not dared;  
On him and on his high endeavour 1214  
The light of praise shall shine for ever!  
Nor did he (such Heaven's will) in vain  
His solitary course maintain;  
Not vainly struggled in the might  
Of duty, seeing with clear sight;  
He was their comfort to the last, 1220  
Their joy till every pang was past.

"I witnessed when to York they  
came—  
What, Lady, if their feet were tied;  
They might deserve a good Man's blame;  
But marks of infamy and shame— 1225  
These were their triumph, these their  
pride;

Nor wanted 'mid the pressing crowd  
Deep feeling, that found utterance loud,  
'Lo, Francis comes,' there were who cried,  
'A Prisoner once, but now set free!' 1230  
'Tis well, for he the worst defied  
Through force of natural piety;  
He rose not in this quarrel, he,  
For concord's sake and England's good,  
Suit to his Brothers often made 1235  
With tears, and of his Father prayed—  
And when he had in vain withstood  
Their purpose—then did he divide,  
He parted from them; but at their side  
Now walks in unanimity. 1240  
Then peace to cruelty and scorn,  
While to the prison they are borne,  
Peace, peace to all indignity!"

"And so in Prison were they laid—  
Oh hear me, hear me, gentle Maid, 1245  
For I am come with power to bless,  
By scattering gleams, through your dis-  
tress,  
Of a redeeming happiness.  
Me did a reverent pity move  
And privilege of ancient love; 1250  
And, in your service making bold,  
Entrance I gained to that strong-hold.

"Your Father gave me cordial greet-  
ing;  
But to his purposes, that burned  
Within him, instantly returned: 1255  
He was commanding and entreating,  
And said—"We need not stop, my Son!  
Thoughts press, and time is hurrying  
on!"—  
And so to Francis he renewed 1259  
His words, more calmly thus pursued.

"Might this our enterprise have sped,  
Change wide and deep the Land had seen,  
A renovation from the dead,  
A spring-tide of immortal green: 1264  
The darksome altars would have blazed  
Like stars when clouds are rolled away;  
Salvation to all eyes that gazed,  
Once more the Rood had been upraised  
To spread its arms, and stand for aye.  
Then, then—had I survived to see 1270  
New life in Bolton Priory;  
The voice restored, the eye of Truth  
Re-opened that inspired my youth;  
To see her in her pomp arrayed—  
This Banner (for such vow I made) 1275  
Should on the consecrated breast  
Of that same Temple have found rest:  
I would myself have hung it high,  
Fit offering of glad victory! 1279

"A shadow of such thought remains  
To cheer this sad and pensive time;  
A solemn fancy yet sustains  
One feeble Being—bids me climb  
Even to the last—one effort more  
To attest my Faith, if not restore. 1285

"Hear then," said he, "while I im-  
part,  
My Son, the last wish of my heart.  
The Banner strive thou to regain;  
And, if the endeavour prove not vain,  
Bear it—to whom if not to thee 1290  
Shall I this lonely thought consign?—  
Bear it to Bolton Priory,  
And lay it on Saint Mary's shrine;  
To wither in the sun and breeze  
Mid those decaying sanctities. 1295  
There let at least the gift be laid,  
The testimony there displayed;

Bold proof that with no selfish aim,  
But for lost Faith and Christ's dear  
name,  
I helmeted a brow though white, 1300  
And took a place in all men's sight;  
Yea, offered up this noble Brood,  
This fair unrivalled Brotherhood,  
And turned away from thee, my Son!  
And left—but be the rest unsaid, 1305  
The name untouched, the tear unshed;—  
My wish is known, and I have done:  
Now promise, grant this one request,  
This dying prayer, and be thou blest!"

"Then Francis answered—"Trust thy  
Son, 1310  
For, with God's will, it shall be done!"—

"The pledge obtained, the solemn word  
Thus scarcely given, a noise was heard,  
And Officers appeared in state  
To lead the prisoners to their fate. 1315  
They rose, oh! wherefore should I fear  
To tell, or, Lady, you to hear?  
They rose—embraces none were given—  
They stood like trees when earth and  
heaven 1319  
Are calm; they knew each other's worth,  
And reverently the Band went forth.  
They met, when they had reached the door,  
One with profane and harsh intent  
Placed there—that he might go before  
And, with that rueful Banner borne 1325  
Aloft in sign of taunting scorn,  
Conduct them to their punishment:  
So cruel Sussex, unrestrained  
By human feeling, had ordained.  
The unhappy Banner Francis saw, 1330  
And, with a look of calm command  
Inspiring universal awe,  
He took it from the soldier's hand;  
And all the people that stood round 1334  
Confirmed the deed in peace profound.  
—High transport did the Father shed  
Upon his Son—and they were led,  
Led on, and yielded up their breath;  
Together died, a happy death!—  
But Francis, soon as he had braved 1340  
That insult, and the Banner saved,  
Athwart the unresisting tide  
Of the spectators occupied

In admiration or dismay,  
Bore instantly his Charge away." 1345

These things, which thus had in the  
sight

And hearing passed of Him who stood  
With Emily, on the Watch-tower height,  
In Rylstone's woeful neighbourhood,  
He told; and oftentimes with voice 1350

Of power to comfort or rejoice;  
For deepest sorrows that aspire  
Go high, no transport ever higher.

"Yes—God is rich in mercy," said  
The old Man to the silent Maid, 1355

"Yet, Lady! shines, through this black  
night,

One star of aspect heavenly bright;  
Your brother lives—he lives—is come  
Perhaps already to his home;

Then let us leave this dreary place." 1360  
She yielded, and with gentle pace,  
Though without one uplifted look,  
To Rylstone-hall her way she took.

### Canto Sixth.

WHY comes not Francis?—From the  
doleful City

He fled,—and, in his flight, could hear 1365  
The death-sounds of the Minster-bell:

That sullen stroke pronounced farewell  
To Marmaduke, cut off from pity!

To Ambrose that! and then a knell  
For him, the sweet half-opened Flower!

For all—all dying in one hour! 1371  
—Why comes not Francis? Thoughts of

love

Should bear him to his Sister dear  
With the fleet motion of a dove;

Yea, like a heavenly messenger 1375  
Of speediest wing, should he appear.

Why comes he not?—for westward fast  
Along the plain of York he past;

Reckless of what impels or leads,  
Unchecked he hurries on;—nor heeds 1380

The sorrow, through the Villages,  
Spread by triumphant cruelties

Of vengeful military force,  
And punishment without remorse.

He marked not, heard not, as he fled; 1385  
All but the suffering heart was dead

For him abandoned to blank awe,

To vacancy, and horror strong:  
And the first object which he saw,  
With conscious sight, as he swept along—  
It was the Banner in his hand! 1391  
He felt—and made a sudden stand.

He looked about like one betrayed:  
What hath he done? what promise made?  
Oh weak, weak moment! to what end 1395

Can such a vain oblation tend,  
And he the Bearer?—Can he go

Carrying this instrument of woe,  
And find, find anywhere, a right

To excuse him in his Country's sight? 1400  
No; will not all men deem the change

A downward course, perverse and strange?  
Here is it;—but how? when? must she,

The unoffending Emily,  
Again this piteous object see? 1405

Such conflict long did he maintain,  
Nor liberty nor rest could gain:

His own life into danger brought  
By this sad burden—even that thought,

Exciting self-suspicion strong, 1410  
Swayed the brave man to his wrong.

And how—unless it were the sense  
Of all-disposing Providence,

Its will unquestionably shown—  
How has the Banner clung so fast 1415

To a palsied, and unconscious hand;  
Clung to the hand to which it passed

Without impediment? And why  
But that Heaven's purpose might be

known  
Doth now no hindrance meet his eye, 1420

No intervention, to withstand  
Fulfilment of a Father's prayer

Breathed to a Son forgiven, and blest  
When all resentments were at rest,

And life in death laid the heart bare?—  
Then, like a spectre sweeping by, 1425

Rushed through his mind the prophecy  
Of utter desolation made

To Emily in the yew-tree shade:  
He sighed, submitting will and power 1430

To the stern embrace of that grasping  
hour.

"No choice is left, the deed is mine—  
Dead are they, dead!—and I will go,

And, for their sakes, come weal or woe,  
Will lay the Relic on the shrine." 1435

So forward with a steady will  
 He went, and traversed plain and hill;  
 And up the vale of Wharf his way  
 Pursued;—and, at the dawn of day,  
 A ttained a summit whence his eyes 1440  
 Could see the Tower of Bolton rise.  
 There Francis for a moment's space  
 Made halt—but hark! a noise behind  
 Of horsemen at an eager pace!  
 He heard, and with misgiving mind. 1445  
 —'Tis Sir George Bowes who leads the  
 Band:

They come, by cruel Sussex sent;  
 Who, when the Nortons from the hand  
 Of death had drunk their punishment,  
 Bethought him, angry and ashamed, 1450  
 How Francis, with the Banner claimed  
 As his own charge, had disappeared,  
 By all the standers-by revered.  
 His whole bold carriage (which had  
 quelled  
 Thus far the Opposer, and repelled 1455  
 All censure, enterprise so bright  
 That even bad men had vainly striven  
 Against that overcoming light)  
 Was then reviewed, and prompt word  
 given,  
 That to what place soever fled 1460  
 He should be seized, alive or dead.

The troop of horse have gained the  
 height  
 Where Francis stood in open sight.  
 They hem him round—"Behold the  
 proof,"  
 They cried, "the Ensign in his hand! 1465  
 He did not arm, he walked aloof!  
 For why?—to save his Father's land;  
 Worst Traitor of them all is he,  
 A Traitor dark and cowardly!"

"I am no Traitor," Francis said, 1470  
 "Though this unhappy freight I bear;  
 And must not part with. But beware;—  
 Err not, by hasty zeal misled,  
 Nor do a suffering Spirit wrong,  
 Whose self-reproaches are too strong!"  
 At this he from the beaten road 1475  
 Retreated towards a brake of thorn,  
 That like a place of vantage showed;  
 And there stood bravely, though forlorn.

In self-defence with warlike brow 1480  
 He stood,—nor weaponless was now;  
 He from a Soldier's hand had snatched  
 A spear,—and, so protected, watched  
 The Assailants, turning round and round;  
 But from behind with treacherous wound  
 A Spearman brought him to the ground.  
 The guardian lance, as Francis fell,  
 Dropped from him; but his other hand  
 The Banner clenched; till, from out the  
 Band,

One, the most eager for the prize, 1490  
 Rushed in; and—while, O grief to tell!  
 A glimmering sense still left, with eyes  
 Unclosed the noble Francis lay—  
 Seized it, as hunters seize their prey;  
 But not before the warm life-blood 1495  
 Had tinged more deeply, as it flowed,  
 The wounds the brodered Banner  
 showed,  
 Thy fatal work, O Maiden, innocent as  
 good!

\* Proudly the Horsemen bore away  
 The Standard; and where Francis lay 1500  
 There was he left alone, unwept,  
 And for two days unnoticed slept.  
 For at that time bewildering fear  
 Possessed the country, far and near;  
 But, on the third day, passing by 1505  
 One of the Norton Tenantry  
 Espied the uncovered Corse; the Man  
 Shrunk as he recognised the face,  
 And to the nearest homesteads ran  
 And called the people to the place. 1510  
 —How desolate is Rylstone-hall!  
 This was the instant thought of all;  
 And if the lonely Lady there  
 Should be; to her they cannot bear  
 This weight of anguish and despair. 1515  
 So, when upon sad thoughts had prest  
 Thoughts sadder still, they deemed it  
 best  
 That, if the Priest should yield assent  
 And no one hinder their intent,  
 Then, they, for Christian pity's sake, 1520  
 In holy ground a grave would make;  
 And straightway buried he should be  
 In the Churchyard of the Priory.

Apart, some little space, was made  
 The grave where Francis must be laid.

In no confusion or neglect 1526  
 This did they,—but in pure respect  
 That he was born of gentle blood;  
 And that there was no neighbourhood  
 Of kindred for him in that ground: 1530  
 So to the Churchyard they are bound,  
 Bearing the body on a bier;  
 And psalms they sing—a holy sound  
 That hill and vale with sadness hear.

But Emily hath raised her head, 1535  
 And is again disquieted;  
 She must behold!—so many gone,  
 Where is the solitary One?  
 And forth from Rylstone-hall stepped  
 she,—  
 To seek her Brother forth she went, 1540  
 And tremblingly her course she bent  
 Toward Bolton's ruined Priory.  
 She comes, and in the vale hath heard  
 The funeral dirge;—she sees the knot  
 Of people, sees them in one spot— 1545  
 And darting like a wounded bird  
 She reached the grave, and with her  
 breast  
 Upon the ground received the rest,—  
 The consummation, the whole ruth  
 And sorrow of this final truth! 1550

## Canto Seventh.

"Powers there are  
 That touch each other to the quick—in modes  
 Which the gross world no sense hath to perceive,  
 No soul to dream of!"  
 THOU Spirit, whose angelic hand  
 Was to the harp a strong command,  
 Called the submissive strings to wake  
 In glory for this Maiden's sake,  
 Say, Spirit! whither hath she fled 1555  
 To hide her poor afflicted head?  
 What mighty forest in its gloom  
 Enfolds her?—is a rifted tomb  
 Within the wilderness her seat?  
 Some island which the wild waves  
 beat— 1560  
 Is that the Sufferer's last retreat?  
 Or some aspiring rock, that shrouds  
 Its perilous front in mists and clouds?

High-climbing rock, low sunless dale,  
 Sea, desert, what do these avail? 1565  
 Oh take her anguish and her fears  
 Into a deep recess of years!

'Tis done;—despoil and desolation  
 O'er Rylstone's fair domain have blown;  
 Pools, terraces, and walks are sown 1570  
 With weeds; the bowers are overthrown,  
 Or have given way to slow mutation,  
 While, in their ancient habitation  
 The Norton name hath been unknown.  
 The lordly Mansion of its pride 1575  
 Is stripped; the ravage hath spread wide  
 Through park and field, a perishing  
 That mocks the gladness of the Spring!  
 And, with this silent gloom agreeing,  
 Appears a joyless human Being, 1580  
 Of aspect such as if the waste  
 Were under her dominion placed.  
 Upon a primrose bank, her throne  
 Of quietness, she sits alone;  
 Among the ruins of a wood, 1585  
 Erewhile a covert bright and green,  
 And where full many a brave tree stood,  
 That used to spread its boughs, and ring  
 With the sweet bird's carolling.  
 Behold her, like a virgin Queen, 1590  
 Neglecting in imperial state  
 These outward images of fate,  
 And carrying inward a serene  
 And perfect sway, through many a thought  
 Of chance and change, that hath been  
 brought 1595  
 To the subjection of a holy,  
 Though stern and rigorous, melancholy!  
 The like authority, with grace  
 Of awfulness, is in her face,—  
 There hath she fixed it; yet it seems 1600  
 To o'ershadow by no native right  
 That face, which cannot lose the gleams,  
 Lose utterly the tender gleams,  
 Of gentleness and meek delight,  
 And loving-kindness ever bright: 1605  
 Such is her sovereign mien:—her dress  
 (A vest with woollen cincture tied,  
 A hood of mountain-wool undyed)  
 Is homely,—fashioned to express  
 A wandering Pilgrim's humbleness. 1610

And she hath wandered, long and far,  
 Beneath the light of sun and star;

<sup>1</sup> See *Address to Kilmurn Castle (Memorials of a Tour in Scotland, 1808)*, II. 6-9.—Ed.

Hath roamed in trouble and in grief,  
 Driven forward like a withered leaf,  
 Yea, like a ship at random blown 1615  
 To distant places and unknown.  
 But now she dares to seek a haven  
 Among her native wilds of Craven;  
 Hath seen again her Father's roof,  
 And put her fortitude to proof; 1620  
 The mighty sorrow hath been borne,  
 And she is thoroughly forlorn:  
 Her soul doth in itself stand fast,  
 Sustained by memory of the past  
 And strength of Reason; held above 1625  
 The infirmities of mortal love;  
 Undaunted, lofty, calm, and stable,  
 And awfully impenetrable.

And so—beneath a mouldered tree,  
 A self-surviving leafless oak 1630  
 By unregarded age from stroke  
 Of ravage saved—sate Emily.  
 There did she rest, with head reclined,  
 Herself most like a stately flower,  
 (Such have I seen) whom chance of  
 birth 1635

Hath separated from its kind,  
 To live and die in a shady bower,  
 Single on the gladsome earth.

When, with a noise like distant thunder,  
 A troop of deer came sweeping by; 1640  
 And, suddenly, behold a wonder!  
 For One, among those rushing deer,  
 A single One, in mid career  
 Hath stopped, and fixed her large full eye  
 Upon the Lady Emily; 1645  
 A Doe most beautiful, clear-white,  
 A radiant creature, silver-bright!

Thus checked, a little while it stayed;  
 A little thoughtful pause it made;  
 And then advanced with stealth-like  
 pace, 1650  
 Drew softly near her, and more near—  
 Looked round—but saw no cause for fear;  
 So to her feet the Creature came,  
 And laid its head upon her knee,  
 And looked into the Lady's face, 1655  
 A look of pure benignity,  
 And fond unclouded memory.  
 It is, thought Emily, the same,  
 The very Doe of other years!—

The pleading look the Lady viewed, 1660  
 And, by her gushing thoughts subdued,  
 She melted into tears—  
 A flood of tears that flowed apace  
 Upon the happy Creature's face.

Oh, moment ever blest! O Pair 1665  
 Beloved of Heaven, Heaven's chosen care,  
 This was for you a precious greeting;  
 And may it prove a fruitful meeting!  
 Joined are they, and the sylvan Doe  
 Can she depart? can she forego 1670  
 The Lady, once her playful peer,  
 And now her sainted Mistress dear?  
 And will not Emily receive  
 This lovely chronicler of things  
 Long past, delights and sorrowings? 1675  
 Lone Sufferer! will not she believe  
 The promise in that speaking face;  
 And welcome, as a gift of grace,  
 The saddest thought the Creature brings?

That day, the first of a re-union 1680  
 Which was to teem with high communion,  
 That day of balmy April weather,  
 They tarried in the wood together.  
 And when, ere fall of evening dew,  
 She from her sylvan haunt withdrew, 1685  
 The White Doe tracked with faithful pace  
 The Lady to her dwelling-place;  
 That nook where, on paternal ground,  
 A habitation she had found,  
 The Master of whose humble board 1690  
 Once owned her Father for his Lord;  
 A hut, by tufted trees defended,  
 Where Rylstone brook with Wharf is  
 blended.

When Emily by morning light  
 Went forth, the Doe stood there in  
 sight. 1695  
 She shrunk:—with one frail shock of pain  
 Received and followed by a prayer,  
 She saw the Creature once again;  
 Shun will she not, she feels, will bear;—  
 But, wheresoever she looked round, 1700  
 All now was trouble-haunted ground;  
 And therefore now she deems it good  
 Once more this restless neighbourhood  
 To leave.—Unwooded, yet unforbidden,  
 The White Doe followed up the vale, 1705  
 Up to another cottage, hidden

In the deep fork of Amerdale;  
And there may Emily restore  
Herself, in spots unseen before.  
—Why tell of mossy rock, or tree, 1710  
By lurking Dernbrook's pathless side,  
Haunts of a strengthening amity  
That calmed her, cheered, and fortified?  
For she hath ventured now to read  
Of time, and place, and thought, and  
deed— 1715

Endless history that lies  
In her silent Follower's eyes;  
Who with a power like human reason  
Discerns the favourable season,  
Skilled to approach or to retire,— 1720  
From looks conceiving her desire;  
From look, deportment, voice, or mien,  
That vary to the heart within.  
If she too passionately wreathed  
Her arms, or over-deeply breathed, 1725  
Walked quick or slowly, every mood  
In its degree was understood;  
Then well may their accord be true,  
And kindest intercourse ensue.  
—Oh! surely 'twas a gentle rousing 1730  
When she by sudden glimpse espied  
The White Doe on the Mountain browsing,  
Or in the meadow wandered wide!  
How pleased, when down the Stragglers sank  
Beside her, on some sunny bank! 1735  
How soothed, when in thick bower en-  
closed,

They, like a nested pair, reposed!  
Fair Vision! when it crossed the Maid  
Within some rocky cavern laid,  
The dark cave's portal gliding by, 1740  
White as whitest cloud on high  
Floating through the azure sky.  
—What now is left for pain or fear?  
That Presence, dearer and more dear,  
While they, side by side, were straying,  
And the shepherd's pipe was playing,  
Did now a very gladness yield  
At morning to the dewy field,  
And with a deeper peace endued  
The hour of moonlight solitude. 1750

With her Companion, in such frame  
Of mind, to Rylstone back she came;  
And, ranging through the wasted groves,  
Received the memory of old loves,

Undisturbed and undistrest, 1755  
Into a soul which now was blest  
With a soft spring-day of holy,  
Mild, and grateful, melancholy:  
Not sunless gloom or unenlightened,  
But by tender fancies brightened. 1760

When the bells of Rylstone played  
Their sabbath music—"God us ayde!"  
That was the sound they seemed to speak;  
Inscriptive legend which I ween  
May on these holy bells be seen, 1765  
That legend and her Grandsire's name;  
And oftentimes the Lady meek  
Had in her childhood read the same;  
Words which she slighted at that day;  
But now, when such sad change was  
wrought, 1770  
And of that lonely name she thought,  
The bells of Rylstone seemed to say,  
While she sate listening in the shade,  
With vocal music, "God us ayde;"  
And all the hills were glad to bear 1775  
Their part in this effectual prayer.

Nor lacked she Reason's firmest power;  
But with the White Doe at her side  
Up would she climb to Norton Tower,  
And thence look round her far and  
wide, 1780  
Her fate there measuring;—all is stilled,—  
The weak One hath subdued her heart;  
Behold the prophecy fulfilled,  
Fulfilled, and she sustains her part!  
But here her Brother's words have  
failed; 1785  
Here hath a milder doom prevailed;  
That she, of him and all bereft,  
Hath yet this faithful Partner left;  
This one Associate that disproves  
His words remains for her, and loves. 1790  
If tears are shed, they do not fall  
For loss of him—for one, or all;  
Yet sometimes, sometimes doth she weep  
Moved gently in her soul's soft sleep;  
A few tears down her cheek descend 1795  
For this her last and living Friend.

Bless, tender Hearts, their mutual lot,  
And bless for both this savage spot;  
Which Emily doth sacred hold  
For reasons dear and manifold— 1800

Here hath she, here before her sight,  
Close to the summit of this height,  
The grassy rock-encircled Pound  
In which the Creature first was found.  
So beautiful the timid Thrall 1805  
(A spotless Youngling white as foam)  
Her youngest Brother brought it home;  
The youngest, then a lusty boy,  
Bore it, or led, to Rylstone-hall  
With heart brimful of pride and joy! 1810

But most to Bolton's sacred Pile,  
On favouring nights, she loved to go;  
There ranged through cloister, court, and  
aisle,

Attended by the soft-paced Doe;  
Nor feared she in the still moonshine 1815  
To look upon Saint Mary's shrine;  
Nor on the lonely turf that showed  
Where Francis slept in his last abode.  
For that she came; there oft she sate  
Forlorn, but not disconsolate: 1820  
And when she from the abyss returned  
Of thought, she neither shrunk nor  
mourned;

Was happy that she lived to greet  
Her mute Companion as it lay  
In love and pity at her feet; 1825  
How happy in its turn to meet  
The recognition! the mild glance  
Beamed from that gracious countenance;  
Communication, like the ray  
Of a new morning, to the nature 1830  
And prospects of the inferior Creature!

A mortal Song we sing, by dower  
Encouraged of celestial power;  
Power which the viewless Spirit shed  
By whom we were first visited; 1835  
Whose voice we heard, whose hand and  
wings

Swept like a breeze the conscious strings,  
When, left in solitude, erewhile  
We stood before this ruined Pile,  
And, quitting unsubstantial dreams, 1840  
Sang in this Presence kindred themes;  
Distress and desolation spread  
Through human hearts, and pleasure  
dead,—

Dead—but to live again on earth,  
A second and yet nobler birth; 1845

Dire overthrow, and yet how high  
The re-ascent in sanctity!  
From fair to fairer; day by day  
A more divine and loftier way!  
Even such this blessed Pilgrim trod, 1850  
By sorrow lifted towards her God;  
Uplifted to the purest sky  
Of undisturbed mortality.  
Her own thoughts loved she; and could  
bend

A dear look to her lowly Friend; 1855  
There stopped; her thirst was satisfied  
With what this innocent spring supplied;  
Her sanction inwardly she bore,  
And stood apart from human cares:  
But to the world returned no more, 1860  
Although with no unwilling mind  
Help did she give at need, and joined  
The Wharfedale peasants in their prayers.  
At length, thus faintly, faintly tied  
To earth, she was set free, and died. 1865  
Thy soul, exalted Emily,  
Maid of the blasted family,  
Rose to the God from whom it came!  
—In Rylstone Church her mortal frame  
Was buried by her Mother's side. 1870

Most glorious sunset! and a ray  
Survives—the twilight of this day—  
In that fair Creature whom the fields  
Support, and whom the forest shields;  
Who, having filled a holy place, 1875  
Partakes, in her degree, Heaven's grace;  
And bears a memory and a mind  
Raised far above the law of kind;  
Haunting the spots with lonely cheer  
Which her dear Mistress once held  
dear: 1880

Loves most what Emily loved most—  
The enclosure of this churchyard ground;  
Here wanders like a gliding ghost,  
And every sabbath here is found;  
Comes with the people when the bells 1885  
Are heard among the moorland dells,  
Finds entrance through yon arch, where  
way

Lies open on the sabbath day;  
Here walks amid the mournful waste  
Of prostrate altars, shrines defaced, 1890  
And floors encumbered with rich show  
Of fret-work imagery laid low;

|  |      |                                      |      |
|--|------|--------------------------------------|------|
| Paces softly, or makes halt,             |      | With those adversities unmoved ;     |      |
| By fractured cell, or tomb, or vault ;   |      | Calm spectacle, by earth and sky     |      |
| By plate of monumental brass             | 1895 | In their benignity approved !        |      |
| Dim-gleaming among weeds and grass,      |      | And aye, methinks, this hoary Pile,  | 1905 |
| And sculptured Forms of Warriors brave : |      | Subdued by outrage and decay,        |      |
| But chiefly by that single grave,        |      | Looks down upon her with a smile,    |      |
| That one sequestered hillock green,      |      | A gracious smile, that seems to say— |      |
| The pensive visitant is seen.            | 1900 | “Thou, thou art not a Child of Time, |      |
| There doth the gentle Creature lie       |      | But Daughter of the Eternal Prime !” | 1910 |

# ECCLESIASTICAL SONNETS.

## IN SERIES<sup>1</sup>.

[Composed mostly in 1821.—Published 1822.]

### PART I.

FROM THE INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY INTO BRITAIN TO THE  
CONSUMMATION OF THE PAPAL DOMINION.

"A verse may catch a wandering Soul, that flies  
Profounder Tracts, and by a blest surprise  
Convert delight into a Sacrifice<sup>2</sup>."

#### I.

##### INTRODUCTION.

I, who accompanied with faithful pace  
Cerulean Duddon from its cloud-fed  
spring,  
And loved with spirit ruled by his to  
sing  
Of mountain-quiet and boon nature's  
grace;  
I, who essayed the nobler Stream to  
trace 5  
Of Liberty, and smote the plausible  
string  
Till the checked torrent, proudly triumph-  
ing,  
Won for herself a lasting resting-place;  
Now seek upon the heights of Time the  
source  
Of a HOLY RIVER, on whose banks are  
found 10  
Sweet pastoral flowers, and laurels that  
have crowned

Full oft the unworthy brow of lawless  
force;  
And, for delight of him who tracks its  
course,  
Immortal amaranth and palms abound.

#### II.

##### CONJECTURES.

If there be prophets on whose spirits  
rest  
Past things, revealed like future, they  
can tell  
What Powers, presiding o'er the sacred  
well  
Of Christian Faith, this savage Island  
blessed  
With its first bounty. Wandering through  
the west, 5  
Did holy Paul<sup>3</sup> a while in Britain dwell,  
And call the Fountain forth by miracle,  
And with dread signs the nascent Stream  
invest?

<sup>1</sup> The *Ecclesiastical Sonnets* (first so called in 1837; previously *Ecclesiastical Sketches*) were written for the most part in 1821, and published in 1822. Chronological notes are attached only to those sonnets to which this observation does not apply.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> This motto, from George Herbert, was added in 1827.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup> See Note, p. 920.

Or He, whose bonds dropped off, whose  
 prison doors  
 Flew open, by an Angel's voice un-  
 barred? <sup>10</sup>  
 Or some of humbler name, to these wild  
 shores  
 Storm-driven; who, having seen the cup  
 of woe  
 Pass from their Master, sojourned here to  
 guard  
 The precious Current they had taught to  
 flow?

## III.

## TREPIDATION OF THE DRUIDS.

SCREAMS round the Arch-druid's brow the  
 sea-mew<sup>1</sup>—white  
 As Menai's foam; and toward the mystic  
 ring  
 Where Augurs stand, the Future ques-  
 tioning,  
 Slowly the cormorant aims her heavy  
 flight,  
 Portending ruin to each baleful rite <sup>5</sup>  
 That, in the lapse of ages, hath crept o'er  
 Diluvian truths, and patriarchal lore.  
 Haughty the Bard: can these meek doc-  
 trines blight  
 His transports? wither his heroic strains?  
 But all shall be fulfilled;—the Julian  
 spear <sup>10</sup>  
 A way first opened; and, with Roman  
 chains,  
 The tidings come of Jesus crucified;  
 They come—they spread—the weak, the  
 suffering, hear;  
 Receive the faith, and in the hope abide.

## IV.

## DRUIDICAL EXCOMMUNICATION.

MERCY and Love have met thee on thy  
 road,  
 Thou wretched Outcast, from the gift of  
 fire  
 And food cut off by sacerdotal ire,

<sup>1</sup> This water-fowl was, among the Druids, an emblem of those traditions connected with the Deluge that made an important part of their mysteries. The Cormorant was a bird of bad omen.

From every sympathy that Man be-  
 stowed!  
 Yet shall it claim our reverence, that to  
 God, <sup>5</sup>  
 Ancient of days! that to the eternal Sire,  
 These jealous Ministers of law aspire,  
 As to the one sole fount whence wisdom  
 flowed,  
 Justice, and order. Tremblingly escaped,  
 As if with prescience of the coming  
 storm, <sup>10</sup>  
 That intimation when the stars were  
 shaped;  
 And still, 'mid yon thick woods, the  
 primal truth  
 Glimmers through many a superstitious  
 form  
 That fills the Soul with unavailing ruth.

## V.

## UNCERTAINTY.

DARKNESS surrounds us; seeking, we are  
 lost  
 On Snowdon's wilds, amid Brigantian  
 coves,  
 Or where the solitary shepherd roves  
 Along the plain of Sarum, by the ghost  
 Of Time and shadows of Tradition crost;  
 And where the boatman of the Western  
 Isles <sup>6</sup>  
 Slackens his course—to mark those holy  
 piles  
 Which yet survive on bleak Iona's coast.  
 Nor these, nor monuments of eldest  
 name,  
 Nor Taliesin's unforgotten lays, <sup>10</sup>  
 Nor characters of Greek or Roman fame,  
 To an unquestionable Source have led;  
 Enough—if eyes, that sought the foun-  
 tain-head  
 In vain, upon the growing Rill may gaze.

## VI.

## PERSECUTION.

LAMENT! for Diocletian's fiery sword  
 Works busy as the lightning; but instinct  
 With malice ne'er to deadliest weapon  
 linked,  
 Which God's ethereal storehouses afford:

Against the Followers of the incarnate  
 Lord 5  
 It rages ;—some are smitten in the field—  
 Some pierced to the heart through the  
 ineffectual shield  
 Of sacred home ;—with pomp are others  
 gored  
 And dreadful respite. Thus was Alban  
 tried,  
 England's first Martyr, whom no threats  
 could shake ; 10  
 Self-offered victim, for his friend he died,  
 And for the faith ; nor shall his name  
 forsake  
 That Hill, whose flowery platform seems  
 to rise  
 By Nature decked for holiest sacrifice<sup>1</sup>.

## VII.

## RECOVERY.

As, when a storm hath ceased, the birds  
 regain  
 Their cheerfulness, and busily retrim  
 Their nests, or chant a gratulating hymn  
 To the blue ether and bespangled plain ;  
 Even so, in many a re-constructed fane, 5  
 Have the survivors of this Storm renewed  
 Their holy rites with vocal gratitude ;  
 And solemn ceremonials they ordain  
 To celebrate their great deliverance ;  
 Most feelingly instructed 'mid their  
 fear— 10  
 That persecution, blind with rage ex-  
 treme,  
 May not the less, through Heaven's mild  
 countenance,  
 Even in her own despite, both feed and  
 cheer ;  
 For all things are less dreadful than they  
 seem.

## VIII.

## TEMPTATIONS FROM ROMAN REFINEMENTS.

WATCH, and be firm ! for soul-subduing  
 vice,  
 Heart-killing luxury, on your steps await.

Fair houses, baths, and banquets delicate,  
 And temples flashing, bright as polar  
 ice,  
 Their radiance through the woods—may  
 yet suffice 5  
 To sap your hardy virtue, and abate  
 Your love of Him upon whose forehead  
 sate  
 The crown of thorns ; whose life-blood  
 flowed, the price  
 Of your redemption. Shun the insidious  
 arts  
 That Rome provides, less dreading from  
 her frown 10  
 Than from her wily praise, her peaceful  
 gown,  
 Language, and letters ;—these, though  
 fondly viewed  
 As humanising graces, are but parts  
 And instruments of deadliest servitude !

## IX.

## DISSENSIONS.

THAT heresies should strike (if truth be  
 scanned  
 Presumptuously) their roots both wide  
 and deep,  
 Is natural as dreams to feverish sleep.  
 Lo ! Discord at the altar dares to stand  
 Uplifting toward high Heaven her fiery  
 brand, 5  
 A cherished Priestess of the new-bap-  
 tized !  
 But chastisement shall follow peace de-  
 spised.  
 The Pictish cloud darkens the enervate  
 land  
 By Rome abandoned ; vain are suppliant  
 cries,  
 And prayers that would undo her forced  
 farewell ; 10  
 For she returns not.—Awed by her own  
 knell,  
 She casts the Britons upon ' strange  
 Allies,  
 Soon to become more dreaded enemies  
 Than heartless misery called them to  
 repel.

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 920.

## X.

STRUGGLE OF THE BRITONS AGAINST  
THE BARBARIANS.

RISE!—they *have* risen: of brave Aneurin  
ask  
How they have scourged old foes; per-  
fidious friends:  
The Spirit of Caractacus descends  
Upon the Patriots, animates their task;—  
Amazement runs before the towering  
casque  
Of Arthur, bearing through the stormy  
field  
The virgin sculptured on his Christian  
shield:—  
Stretched in the sunny light of victory  
bask  
The Host that followed Urien as he strode  
O'er heaps of slain;—from Cambrian  
wood and moss  
Druids descend, auxiliars of the Cross;  
Bards, nursed on blue Plinlimmon's still  
abode,  
Rush on the fight, to harps preferring  
swords,  
And everlasting deeds to burning words!

## XI.

## SAXON CONQUEST.

NOR wants the cause the panic-striking  
aid  
Of hallelujahs<sup>1</sup> tost from hill to hill—  
For instant victory. But Heaven's high  
will  
Permits a second and a darker shade  
Of Pagan night. Afflicted and dismayed,  
The Relics of the sword flee to the moun-  
tains:<sup>\*</sup>  
O wretched Land! whose tears have  
flowed like fountains;  
Whose arts and honours in the dust are  
laid  
By men yet scarcely conscious of a care  
For other monuments than those of  
Earth;  
Who, as the fields and woods have given  
them birth,

Will build their savage fortunes only  
there;  
Content, if foss, and barrow, and the  
girth  
Of long-drawn rampart, witness what  
they were.

## XII.

MONASTERY OF OLD BANGOR<sup>2</sup>.

*THE oppression of the tumult—wrath and  
scorn—  
The tribulation—and the gleaming blades—*  
Such is the impetuous spirit that per-  
vades  
The song of Taliesin;—Ours shall mourn  
The *unarmed* Host who by their prayers  
would turn  
The sword from Bangor's walls, and guard  
the store  
Of Aboriginal and Roman lore,  
And Christian monuments, that now  
must burn  
To senseless ashes. Mark! how all things  
swerve  
From their known course, or vanish like  
a dream;  
Another language spreads from coast to  
coast;  
Only perchance some melancholy Stream  
And some indignant Hills old names pre-  
serve,  
When laws, and creeds, and people all are  
lost!

## XIII.

## CASUAL INCITEMENT.

A BRIGHT-HAIRED company of youthful  
slaves,  
Beautiful strangers, stand within the  
pale  
Of a sad market, ranged for public sale,  
Where Tiber's stream the immortal City  
laves:  
ANGEL by name; and not an ANGEL  
waves  
His wing who could seem lovelier to  
man's eye  
Than they appear to holy Gregory;

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 921.<sup>2</sup> See Note, p. 921.

Who, having learnt that name, salvation  
 craves  
 For Them, and for their Land. The  
 earnest Sire,  
 His questions urging, feels, in slender  
 ties 10  
 Of chiming sound, commanding sym-  
 pathies;  
 DE-IRIANS—he would save them from  
 God's IRE;  
 Subjects of Saxon *ÆLLA*—they shall sing  
 Glad *HALLE-lujahs* to the eternal King!

## XIV.

## GLAD TIDINGS.

FOR ever hallowed be this morning fair,  
 Blest be the unconscious shore on which  
 ye tread,  
 And blest the silver Cross, which ye,  
 instead  
 Of martial banner, in procession bear;  
 The Cross preceding Him who floats in  
 air, 5  
 The pictured Saviour!—By Augustin led,  
 They come—and onward travel without  
 dread,  
 Chanting in barbarous ears a tuneful  
 prayer—  
 Sung for themselves, and those whom  
 they would free!  
 Rich conquest waits them:—the tem-  
 pestuous sea 10  
 Of Ignorance, that ran so rough and high  
 And heeded not the voice of clashing  
 swords,  
 These good men humble by a few bare  
 words,  
 And calm with fear of God's divinity.

## XV.

PAULINUS<sup>1</sup>.

BUT to remote Northumbria's royal Hall,  
 Where thoughtful Edwin, tutored in the  
 school  
 Of sorrow, still maintains a heathen rule,  
*Who* comes with functions apostolical?  
 Mark him, of shoulders curved, and sta-  
 ture tall, 5

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 921.

Black hair, and vivid eye, and meagre  
 cheek,  
 His prominent feature like an eagle's  
 beak;  
 A Man whose aspect doth at once appal  
 And strike with reverence. The Monarch  
 leans  
 Toward the pure truths this Delegate  
 propounds, 10  
 Repeatedly his own deep mind he sounds  
 With careful hesitation,—then convenes  
 A synod of his Councillors:—give ear,  
 And what a pensive Sage doth utter,  
 hear!

## XVI.

## PERSUASION.

"MAN'S life is like a Sparrow, mighty  
 King!  
 That—while at banquet with your Chiefs  
 you sit  
 Housed near a blazing fire,—is seen to flit  
 Safe from the wintry tempest. Fluttering,  
 Here did it enter; there, on hasty wing, 5  
 Flies out, and passes on from cold to  
 cold;  
 But whence it came we know not, nor  
 behold  
 Whither it goes. Even such, that tran-  
 sient Thing,  
 The human Soul; not utterly unknown  
 While in the Body lodged, her warm  
 abode; 10  
 But from what world She came, what woe  
 or weal  
 On her departure waits, no tongue hath  
 shown;  
 This mystery if the Stranger can reveal,  
 His be a welcome cordially bestowed<sup>2</sup>!"

## XVII.

## CONVERSION.

PROMPT transformation works the novel  
 Lore;  
 The Council closed, the Priest in full  
 career  
 Rides forth, an armed man, and hurls a  
 spear

<sup>2</sup> See Note, p. 921.

To desecrate the Fane which heretofore  
 He served in folly. Woden falls, and  
 Thor  
 Is overturned; the mace, in battle heaved<sup>5</sup>  
 (So might they dream) till victory was  
 achieved,  
 Drops, and the God himself is seen no  
 more.  
 Temple and Altar sink, to hide their  
 shame  
 Amid oblivious weeds. "*O come to me, 10*  
*Ye heavy laden!*" such the inviting voice  
 Heard near fresh streams<sup>1</sup>; and thou-  
 sands, who rejoice  
 In the new Rite—the pledge of sanctity,  
 Shall, by regenerate life, the promise  
 claim.

## XVIII.

## APOLOGY.

NOR scorn the aid which Fancy oft doth  
 lend  
 The Soul's eternal interests to promote:  
 Death, darkness, danger, are our natural  
 lot;  
 And evil Spirits *may* our walk attend  
 For aught the wisest know or compre-  
 hend;  
 Then be good Spirits free to breathe a note<sup>5</sup>  
 Of elevation; let their odours float  
 Around these Converts; and their glories  
 blend,  
 The midnight stars outshining, or the blaze  
 Of the noon-day. Nor doubt that golden  
 cords<sup>10</sup>  
 Of good works, mingling with the visions,  
 raise  
 The Soul to purer worlds: and *who* the line  
 Shall draw, the limits of the power define,  
 That even imperfect faith to man affords?

## XIX.

PRIMITIVE SAXON CLERGY<sup>2</sup>.

How beautiful your presence, how benign,  
 Servants of God! who not a thought will  
 share  
 With the vain world; who, outwardly as  
 bare

As winter trees, yield no fallacious sign  
 That the firm soul is clothed with fruit  
 divine!  
 Such Priest, when service worthy of his<sup>5</sup>  
 care  
 Has called him forth to breathe the  
 common air,  
 Might seem a saintly Image from its  
 shrine  
 Descended:—happy are the eyes that meet  
 The Apparition; evil thoughts are stayed  
 At his approach, and low-bowed necks  
 entreat<sup>11</sup>  
 A benediction from his voice or hand;  
 Whence grace, through which the heart  
 can understand,  
 And vows, that bind the will, in silence  
 made.

## XX.

## OTHER INFLUENCES.

AH, when the Body, round which in love  
 we clung,  
 Is chilled by death, does mutual service  
 fail?  
 Is tender pity then of no avail?  
 Are intercessions of the fervent tongue  
 A waste of hope?—From this sad source<sup>5</sup>  
 have sprung  
 Rites that console the Spirit, under grief  
 Which ill can brook more rational relief:  
 Hence, prayers are shaped amiss, and  
 dirges sung  
 For Souls whose doom is fixed! The way  
 is smooth  
 For Power that travels with the human  
 heart:<sup>10</sup>  
 Confession ministers the pang to soothe  
 In him who at the ghost of guilt doth  
 start.  
 Ye holy Men, so earnest in your care,  
 Of your own mighty instruments beware!

## XXI.

## SECLUSION.

LANCE, shield, and sword relinquished—  
 at his side  
 A bead-roll, in his hand a clasped book,  
 Or staff more harmless than a shepherd's  
 crook,

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 921.    <sup>2</sup> See Note ibid

The war-worn Chieftain quits the world—  
to hide  
His thin autumnal locks where Monks  
abide  
In cloistered privacy. But not to dwell  
In soft repose he comes. Within his cell,  
Round the decaying trunk of human pride,  
At morn, and eve, and midnight's silent  
hour,  
Do penitential cogitations cling;      10  
Like ivy, round some ancient elm, they  
twine  
In grisly folds and strictures serpentine;  
Yet, while they strangle, a fair growth  
they bring,  
For recompense—their own perennial  
bower.

## XXII.

## CONTINUED.

METHINKS that to some vacant hermitage  
*My* feet would rather turn—to some dry  
nook  
Scooped out of living rock, and near a  
brook  
Hurled down a mountain-cove from stage  
to stage,  
Yet tempering, for my sight, its bustling  
rage      5  
In the soft heaven of a translucent pool:  
Thence creeping under sylvan arches cool,  
Fit haunt of shapes whose glorious equi-  
page  
Would elevate my dreams. A beechen bowl,  
A maple dish, my furniture should be; 10  
Crisp, yellow leaves my bed; the hooting  
owl  
My night-watch: nor should e'er the  
crested fowl  
From thorp or vill his matins sound  
for me,  
Tired of the world and all its industry.

## XXIII.

## REPROOF.

BUT what if One, through grove or flowery  
mead,  
Indulging thus at will the creeping feet  
Of a voluptuous indolence, should meet

Thy hovering Shade, O venerable Bede!  
The saint, the scholar, from a circle freed  
Of toil stupendous, in a hallowed seat      6  
Of learning, where thou heard'st the bil-  
lows beat  
On a wild coast, rough monitors to feed  
Perpetual industry. Sublime Recluse!  
The recreant soul, that dares to shun the  
debt      10  
Imposed on human kind, must first forget  
Thy diligence, thy unrelaxing use  
Of a long life; and, in the hour of death,  
The last dear service of thy passing  
breath<sup>1</sup>!

## XXIV.

SAXON MONASTERIES, AND LIGHTS AND  
SHADES OF THE RELIGION.

By such examples moved to unbought  
pains,  
The people work like congregated bees;  
Eager to build the quiet Fortresses  
Where Piety, as they believe, obtains  
From Heaven a *general* blessing; timely  
rains      5  
Or needful sunshine; prosperous enter-  
prise,  
Justice and peace:—bold faith! yet also  
rise  
The sacred Structures for less doubtful  
gains.  
The Sensual think with reverence of the  
palms  
Which the chaste Votaries seek, beyond  
the grave;      10  
If penance be redeemable, thence alms  
Flow to the poor, and freedom to the slave;  
And if full oft the Sanctuary save  
Lives black with guilt, ferocity it calms.

## XXV.

## MISSIONS AND TRAVELS.

NOT sedentary all: there are who roam  
To scatter seeds of life on barbarous  
shores;  
Or quit with zealous step their knee-worn  
floors

<sup>1</sup> He expired dictating the last words of a translation of St. John's Gospel.

To seek the general mart of Christendom;  
Whence they, like richly-laden merchants,  
come

To their beloved cells:—or shall we say  
That, like the Red-cross Knight, they  
urge their way,

To lead in memorable triumph home  
Truth, their immortal Una? Babylon,  
Learned and wise, hath perished utterly,  
Nor leaves her Speech one word to aid  
the sigh

That would lament her;—Memphis, Tyre,  
are gone

With all their Arts,—but classic lore  
glides on

By these Religious saved for all posterity.

## XXVI.

ALFRED.

BEHOLD a pupil of the monkish gown,  
The pious ALFRED, King to Justice dear!  
Lord of the harp and liberating spear;  
Mirror of Princes! Indigent Renown  
Might range the starry ether for a crown  
Equal to *his* deserts, who, like the year, 6  
Pours forth his bounty, like the day doth  
cheer,

And awakes like night with mercy-tempered  
frown.

Ease from this noble miser of his time  
No moment steals; pain narrows not his  
cares<sup>1</sup>.

Though small his kingdom as a spark or  
gem,

Of Alfred boasts remote Jerusalem,  
And Christian India, through her wide-  
spread clime,

In sacred converse gifts with Alfred shares.

## XXVII.

HIS DESCENDANTS.

WHEN thy great soul was freed from  
mortal chains,

Darling of England! many a bitter  
shower

Fell on thy tomb; but emulative power

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 921.

Flowed in thy line through undegenerate  
veins.

The Race of Alfred covet glorious pains 5  
When dangers threaten, dangers ever new!  
Black tempests bursting, blacker still in  
view!

But manly sovereignty its hold retains;  
The roots sincere, the branches bold to strive  
With the fierce tempest, while, within  
the round

Of their protection, gentle virtues thrive; 10  
As oft, 'mid some green plot of open  
ground,

Wide as the oak extends its dewy gloom,  
The fostered hyacinths spread their purple  
bloom.

## XXVIII.

INFLUENCE ABUSED.

URGED by Ambition, who with subtlest  
skill

Changes her means, the Enthusiast as a  
dupe

Shall soar, and as a hypocrite can stoop,  
And turn the instruments of good to ill,  
Moulding the credulous people to his will.

Such DUNSTAN:—from its Benedictine  
coop

Issues the master Mind, at whose fell  
swoop

The chaste affections tremble to fulfil  
Their purposes. Behold, pre-signified,

The Might of spiritual sway! his  
thoughts, his dreams,

Do in the supernatural world abide: 10

So vaunt a throng of Followers, filled  
with pride

In what they see of virtues pushed to  
extremes,

And sorceries of talent misapplied.

## XXIX.

DANISH CONQUESTS.

WOE to the Crown that doth the Cowl  
obey<sup>2</sup>!

Dissension, checking arms that would  
restrain

The incessant Rovers of the northern main,

<sup>2</sup> See Note, p. 921.

Helps to restore and spread a Pagan  
 sway :  
 But Gospel-truth is potent to allay 5  
 Fierceness and rage ; and soon the cruel  
 Dane  
 Feels, through the influence of her gentle  
 reign,  
 His native superstitions melt away.  
 Thus often, when thick gloom the east  
 o'ershrouds,  
 The full-orbed Moon, slow-climbing, doth  
 appear 10  
 Silently to consume the heavy clouds ;  
*How* no one can resolve ; but every eye  
 Around her sees, while air is hushed,  
 a clear  
 And widening circuit of ethereal sky.

## XXX.

## CANUTE.

A PLEASANT music floats along the Mere,  
 From Monks in Ely chanting service high,  
 While-as Canute the King is rowing by :  
 "My Oarsmen," quoth the mighty King,  
 "draw near,  
 That we the sweet song of the Monks  
 may hear !" 5  
 He listens (all past conquests and all  
 schemes  
 Of future vanishing like empty dreams)  
 Heart-touched, and haply not without a  
 tear.  
 The Royal Minstrel, ere the choir is still,  
 While his free Barge skims the smooth  
 flood along, 10  
 Gives to that rapture an accordant  
 Rhyme<sup>1</sup>.  
 O suffering Earth ! be thankful ; sternest  
 clime  
 And rudest age are subject to the thrill  
 Of heaven-descended Piety and Song.

## XXXI.

## THE NORMAN CONQUEST.

THE woman-hearted Confessor prepares  
 The evanescence of the Saxon line.  
 Hark ! 'tis the tolling Curfew !—the stars  
 shine ;

<sup>1</sup> Which is still extant.

But of the lights that cherish household  
 cares  
 And festive gladness, burns not one that  
 dares 5  
 To twinkle after that dull stroke of thine,  
 Emblem and instrument, from Thames to  
 Tyne,  
 Of force that daunts, and cunning that  
 ensnares !  
 Yet as the terrors of the lordly bell,  
 That quench, from hut to palace, lamps  
 and fires, 10  
 Touch not the tapers of the sacred quires ;  
 Even so a thralldom, studious to expel  
 Old laws, and ancient customs to derange,  
 To Creed or Ritual brings no fatal change.

## XXXII.

[Composed ?.—Published 1837.]

COLDLY we spake. The Saxons, over-  
 powered  
 By wrong triumphant through its own  
 excess,  
 From fields laid waste, from house and  
 home devoured  
 By flames, look up to heaven and crave  
 redress  
 From God's eternal justice. Pitiless 5  
 Though men be, there are angels that can  
 feel  
 For wounds that death alone has power  
 to heal,  
 For penitent guilt, and innocent distress.  
 And has a Champion risen in arms to try  
 His Country's virtue, fought, and breathes  
 no more ; 10  
 Him in their hearts the people canonize ;  
 And far above the mine's most precious ore  
 The least small pittance of bare mould  
 they prize  
 Scooped from the sacred earth where his  
 dear relics lie.

## XXXIII.

## THE COUNCIL OF CLERMONT.

"AND shall," the Pontiff asks, "profane-  
 ness flow  
 From Nazareth—source of Christian piety,  
 From Bethlehem, from the Mounts of  
 Agony

And glorified Ascension? Warriors, go,  
With prayers and blessings we your path  
will sow; 5

Like Moses hold our hands erect, till ye  
Have chased far off by righteous victory  
These sons of Amalek, or laid them  
low!"—

"GOD WILLETH IT," the whole assembly  
cry;

Shout which the enraptured multitude  
astounds! 10

The Council-roof and Clermont's towers  
reply;—

"God willeth it," from hill to hill re-  
bounds,

And, in awe-stricken Countries far and  
nigh,

Through "Nature's hollow arch" that  
voice resounds<sup>1</sup>.

## XXXIV.

## CRUSADES.

THE turbaned Race are poured in thicken-  
ing swarms

Along the west; though driven from  
Aquitaine,

The Crescent glitters on the towers of  
Spain;

And soft Italia feels renewed alarms;  
The scimitar, that yields not to the  
charms 5

Of ease, the narrow Bosphorus will dis-  
dain;

Nor long (that crossed) would Grecian  
hills detain

Their tents, and check the current of  
their arms.

Then blame not those who, by the  
mightiest lever

Known to the moral world, Imagination,  
Upheave, so seems it, from her natural  
station 11

All Christendom:—they sweep along (was  
never

So huge a host!)—to tear from the Un-  
believer

The precious Tomb, their haven of sal-  
vation.

## XXXV.

## RICHARD I.

REDOUBTED King, of courage leonine,  
I mark thee, Richard! urgent to equip  
Thy warlike person with the staff and  
scep; 5

I watch thee sailing o'er the midland  
brine;

In conquered Cyprus see thy Bride  
decline 5

Her blushing cheek, love-vows upon her  
lip,

And see love-emblems streaming from thy  
ship,

As thence she holds her way to Palestine.  
My Song, a fearless homager, would  
attend

Thy thundering battle-axe as it cleaves  
the press 10

Of war, but duty summons her away  
To tell—how, finding in the rash distress

Of those Enthusiasts a subservient friend,  
To giddier heights hath clomb the Papal  
sway.

## XXXVI.

## AN INTERDICT.

REALMS quake by turns: proud Arbitress  
of grace,

The Church, by mandate shadowing forth  
the power

She arrogates o'er heaven's eternal door,  
Closes the gates of every sacred place.

Straight from the sun and tainted air's  
embrace 5

All sacred things are covered: cheerful  
morn

Grows sad as night—no seemly garb is  
worn,

Nor is a face allowed to meet a face  
With natural smiles of greeting. Bells  
are dumb; 11

Ditches are graves—funereal rites denied;  
And in the churchyard he must take his  
bride

Who dares be wedded! Fancies thickly  
come

Into the pensive heart ill fortified,  
And comfortless despairs the soul benumb.

<sup>1</sup> The decision of this council was believed to be instantly known in remote parts of Europe.

## XXXVII.

## PAPAL ABUSES.

As with the Stream our voyage we  
pursue,  
The gross materials of this world pre-  
sent  
A marvellous study of wild accident;  
Uncouth proximities of old and new;  
And bold transfigurations, more untrue 5  
(As might be deemed) to disciplined  
intent  
Than aught the sky's fantastic element,  
When most fantastic, offers to the view.  
Saw we not Henry scourged at Becket's  
Shrine?  
Lo! John self-stripped of his insignia:—  
crown, 10  
Sceptre and mantle, sword and ring, laid  
down  
At a proud Legate's feet! The spears that  
line  
Baronial halls the opprobrious insult  
feel;  
And angry Ocean roars a vain appeal.

## XXXVIII.

## SCENE IN VENICE.

BLACK Demons hovering o'er his mitred  
head,  
To Cæsar's Successor the Pontiff spake;  
"Ere I absolve thee, stoop! that on thy  
neck  
Levelled with earth this foot of mine may  
tread."  
Then he, who to the altar had been led, 5  
He, whose strong arm the Orient could  
not check,  
He, who had held the Soldan at his  
beck,  
Stooped, of all glory disinherited,  
And even the common dignity of man!—  
Amazement strikes the crowd: while  
many turn 10  
Their eyes away in sorrow, others burn  
With scorn, invoking a vindictive ban  
From outraged Nature; but the sense of  
most  
In abject sympathy with power is lost.

## XXXIX.

## PAPAL DOMINION.

UNLESS to Peter's Chair the viewless wind  
Must come and ask permission when to  
blow,  
What further empire would it have?  
for now  
A ghostly Domination, unconfined  
As that by dreaming Bards to Love  
assigned, 5  
Sits there in sober truth—to raise the low,  
Perplex the wise, the strong to over-  
throw;  
Through earth and heaven to bind and to  
unbind!—  
Resist—the thunder quails thee!—crouch  
—rebuff  
Shall be thy recompense! from land to  
land 10  
The ancient thrones of Christendom are  
stuff  
For occupation of a magic wand,  
And 'tis the Pope that wields it:—  
whether rough  
Or smooth his front, our world is in his  
hand!

## PART II.

TO THE CLOSE OF THE TROUBLES IN  
THE REIGN OF CHARLES I.

## I.

[Composed ?.—Published 1845.]

How soon—alas! did Man, created pure—  
By Angels guarded, deviate from the line  
Prescribed to duty:—woeful forfeiture  
He made by wilful breach of law divine.  
With like perverseness did the Church  
abjure 5  
Obedience to her Lord, and haste to  
twine,  
'Mid Heaven-born flowers that shall for  
aye endure,  
Weeds on whose front the world had  
fixed her sign.  
O Man,—if with thy trials thus it fares,  
If good can smooth the way to evil choice,

From all rash censure be the mind kept  
free; 11  
He only judges right who weighs, com-  
pares,  
And, in the sternest sentence which his  
voice  
Pronounces, ne'er abandons Charity.

## II.

[Composed ?.—Published 1845.]

FROM false assumption rose, and fondly  
hailed  
By superstition, spread the Papal power;  
Yet do not deem the Autocracy prevailed  
Thus only, even in error's darkest hour.  
She daunts, forth-thundering from her  
spiritual tower 5  
Brute rapine, or with gentle lure she tames.  
Justice and Peace through Her uphold  
their claims;  
And Chastity finds many a sheltering  
bower.  
Realm there is none that if controlled or  
sway'd  
By her commands partakes not, in degree,  
Of good, o'er manners arts and arms,  
diffused: 11  
Yes, to thy domination, Roman See,  
Tho' miserably, oft monstrously, abused  
By blind ambition, be this tribute paid.

## III.

## CISTERTIAN MONASTERY.

"*HERE Man more purely lives, less oft  
doth fall,  
More promptly rises, walks with stricter  
heed,  
More safely rests, dies happier, is freed  
Earlier from cleansing fires, and gains  
withal  
A brighter crown*!"—On yon Cistercian wall  
That confident assurance may be read; 6  
And, to like shelter, from the world have  
fled  
Increasing multitudes. The potent call  
Doubtless shall cheat full oft the heart's  
desires;  
Yet, while the rugged Age on pliant knee  
Vows to rapt Fancy humble fealty, 11

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 921.

A gentler life spreads round the holy  
spires;  
Where'er they rise, the sylvan waste  
retires.  
And aery harvests crown the fertile lea.

## IV.

[Composed ?.—Published 1835.]

DEPLORABLE his lot who tills the ground,  
His whole life long tills it, with heartless  
toil  
Of villain-service, passing with the soil  
To each new Master, like a steer or hound,  
Or like a rooted tree, or stone earth-  
bound; 5  
But mark how gladly, through their own  
domains,  
The Monks relax or break these iron  
chains;  
While Mercy, uttering, through their  
voice, a sound  
Echoed in Heaven, cries out, "Ye Chiefs,  
abate  
These legalized oppressions! Man—whose  
name 10  
And nature God disdained not; Man—  
whose soul  
Christ died for—cannot forfeit his high  
claim  
To live and move exempt from all control  
Which fellow-feeling doth not mitigate!"

## V.

## MONKS AND SCHOOLMEN.

RECORD we too, with just and faithful pen,  
That many hooded Cenobites there are,  
Who in their private cells have yet a care  
Of public quiet; unambitious Men,  
Counsellors for the world, of piercing ken;  
Whose fervent exhortations from afar 6  
Move Princes to their duty, peace or war;  
And oft-times in the most forbidding den  
Of solitude, with love of science strong,  
How patiently the yoke of thought they  
bear! 10  
How subtly glide its finest threads along!  
Spirits that crowd the intellectual sphere  
With mazy boundaries, as the astronomer  
With orb and cycle girds the starry  
throne.

## VI.

## OTHER BENEFITS.

AND, not in vain embodied to the sight,  
 Religion finds even in the stern retreat  
 Of feudal sway her own appropriate seat;  
 From the collegiate pomps on Windsor's  
 height  
 Down to the humbler altar, which the  
 Knight 5  
 And his Retainers of the embattled hall  
 Seek in domestic oratory small,  
 For prayer in stillness, or the chanted  
 rite;  
 Then chiefly dear, when foes are planted  
 round,  
 Who teach the intrepid guardians of the  
 place— 10  
 Hourly exposed to death, with famine  
 worn,  
 And suffering under many a perilous  
 wound—  
 How sad would be their durance, if for-  
 lorn  
 Of offices dispensing heavenly grace!

## VII.

## CONTINUED.

AND what melodious sounds at times  
 prevail!  
 And, ever and anon, how bright a gleam  
 Pours on the surface of the turbid Stream!  
 What heartfelt fragrance mingles with  
 the gale  
 That swells the bosom of our passing sail!  
 For where, but on *this* River's margin,  
 blow 6  
 Those flowers of chivalry, to bind the  
 brow  
 Of hardihood with wreaths that shall not  
 fail?—  
 Fair Court of Edward! wonder of the  
 world!  
 I see a matchless blazonry unfurled 10  
 Of wisdom, magnanimity, and love;  
 And meekness tempering honourable  
 pride;  
 The lamb is couching by the lion's side,  
 And near the flame-eyed eagle sits the  
 dove.

## VIII.

## CRUSADERS.

FURL we the sails, and pass with tardy  
 oars  
 Through these bright regions, casting  
 many a glance  
 Upon the dream-like issues—the romance  
 Of many-coloured life that Fortune pours  
 Round the Crusaders, till on distant  
 shores 5  
 Their labours end; or they return to lie,  
 The vow performed, in cross-legged effigy,  
 Devoutly stretched upon their chancel  
 floors.  
 Am I deceived? Or is their requiem  
 chanted  
 By voices never mute when Heaven un-  
 ties 10  
 Her inmost, softest, tenderest harmonies;  
 Requiem which Earth takes up with voice  
 undaunted,  
 When she would tell how Brave, and  
 Good, and Wise,  
 For their high guerdon not in vain have  
 panted!

## IX.

[Composed 1842.—Published 1845.]

As faith thus sanctified the warrior's crest  
 While from the Papal Unity there came,  
 What feeblér means had failed to give,  
 one aim  
 Diffused thro' all the regions of the  
 West;  
 So does her Unity its power attest 5  
 By works of Art, that shed, on the out-  
 ward frame  
 Of worship, glory and grace, which who  
 shall blame  
 That ever looked to heaven for final rest?  
 Hail countless Temples! that so well  
 befit  
 Your ministry; that, as ye rise and take  
 Form spirit and character from holy  
 writ, 11  
 Give to devotion, wheresoe'er awake,  
 Pinions of high and higher sweep, and  
 make  
 The unconverted soul with awe submit.

## X.

[Composed 1842.—Published 1845.]

WHERE long and deeply hath been fixed  
the root  
In the blest soil of gospel truth, the Tree,  
(Blighted or scathed tho' many branches  
be,  
Put forth to wither, many a hopeful  
shoot)  
Can never cease to bear celestial fruit. 5  
Witness the Church that oft-times, with  
effect  
Dear to the saints, strives earnestly to  
eject  
Her bane, her vital energies recruit.  
Lamenting, do not hopelessly repine  
When such good work is doomed to be  
undone, 10  
The conquests lost that were so hardly  
won:—  
All promises vouchsafed by Heaven will  
shine  
In light confirmed while years their course  
shall run,  
Confirmed alike in progress and decline.

## XI.

## TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

ENOUGH! for see, with dim association  
The tapers burn; the odorous incense feeds  
A greedy flame; the pompous mass pro-  
ceeds;  
The Priest bestows the appointed conse-  
cration; 4  
And, while the Host is raised, its elevation  
An awe and supernatural horror breeds;  
And all the people bow their heads, like  
reeds,  
To a soft breeze, in lowly adoration.  
This Valdo brooks not. On the banks of  
Rhône  
He taught, till persecution chased him  
thence, 10  
To adore the Invisible, and Him alone.  
Nor are his Followers loth to seek defence,  
'Mid woods and wilds, on Nature's craggy  
throne,  
From rites that trample upon soul and  
sense.

## XII.

## THE VAUDOIS.

[Composed ?.—Published 1885.]

BUT whence came they who for the Saviour  
Lord  
Have long borne witness as the Scriptures  
teach?—  
Ages ere Valdo raised his voice to preach  
In Gallic ears the unadulterate Word,  
Their fugitive Progenitors explored 5  
Subalpine vales, in quest of safe retreats  
Where that pure Church survives, though  
summer heats  
Open a passage to the Romish sword,  
Far as it dares to follow. Herbs self-  
sown,  
And fruitage gathered from the chestnut-  
wood, 10  
Nourish the sufferers then; and mists,  
that brood  
O'er chasms with new-fallen obstacles  
bestrown,  
Protect them; and the eternal snow that  
daunts  
Aliens, is God's good winter for their  
haunts.

## XIII.

[Composed ?.—Published 1885.]

PAISED be the Rivers, from their moun-  
tain springs  
Shouting to Freedom, "Plant thy banners  
here!"  
To harassed Piety, "Dismiss thy fear,  
And in our caverns smooth thy ruffled  
wings!"  
Nor be unthanked their final lingerings—  
Silent, but not to high-souled Passion's  
ear— 6  
'Mid reedy fens wide-spread and marshes  
drear,  
Their own creation. Such glad wel-  
comings  
As Po was heard to give where Venice  
rose  
Hailed from aloft those Heirs of truth  
divine 10  
Who near his fountains sought obscure  
repose,

Yet came prepared as glorious lights to  
shine,  
Should that be needed for their sacred  
Charge;  
Blest Prisoners They, whose spirits were  
at large!

## XIV.

## WALDENSES.

THOSE had given earliest notice, as the  
lark  
Springs from the ground the morn to  
gratulate;  
Or rather rose the day to antedate,  
By striking out a solitary spark,  
When all the world with midnight gloom  
was dark.—  
Then followed the Waldensian bands,  
whom Hate  
In vain endeavours to exterminate,  
Whom Obloquy pursues with hideous  
bark<sup>1</sup>:  
But they desist not;—and the sacred fire,  
Rekindled thus, from dens and savage  
woods  
Moves, handed on with never-ceasing care,  
Through courts, through camps, o'er  
limitary floods;  
Nor lacks this sea-girt Isle a timely share  
Of the new Flame, not suffered to expire.

## XV.

## ARCHBISHOP CHICHELEY TO HENRY V.

“WHAT beast in wilderness or cultured  
field  
The lively beauty of the leopard shows?  
What flower in meadow-ground or garden  
grows  
That to the towering lily doth not yield?  
Let both meet only on thy royal shield! 5  
Go forth, great King! claim what thy  
birth bestows;  
Conquer the Gallic lily which thy foes  
Dare to usurp;—thou hast a sword to  
wield,  
And Heaven will crown the right.”—The  
mitred Sire

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 322.

Thus spake—and lo! a Fleet, for Gaul  
address,  
Ploughs her bold course across the won-  
dering seas;  
For, sooth to say, ambition, in the breast  
Of youthful heroes, is no sullen fire,  
But one that leaps to meet the fanning  
breeze.

## XVI.

## WARS OF YORK AND LANCASTER.

THUS is the storm abated by the craft  
Of a shrewd Counsellor, eager to protect  
The Church, whose power hath recently  
been checked,  
Whose monstrous riches threatened. So  
the shaft  
Of victory mounts high, and blood is  
quaffed  
In fields that rival Cressy and Poitiers—  
Pride to be washed away by bitter tears!  
For deep as hell itself, the avenging  
draught  
Of civil slaughter. Yet, while temporal  
power  
Is by these shocks exhausted, spiritual  
truth  
Maintains the else endangered gift of life;  
Proceeds from infancy to lusty youth;  
And, under cover of this woeful strife,  
Gathers unblighted strength from hour  
to hour.

## XVII.

## WICLIFFE.

ONCE more the Church is seized with  
sudden fear,  
And at her call is Wicliffe disinhumed:  
Yea, his dry bones to ashes are consumed  
And flung into the brook that travels  
near;  
Forthwith that ancient Voice which  
Streams can hear  
Thus speaks (that Voice which walks upon  
the wind,  
Though seldom heard by busy human  
kind)—  
“As thou these ashes, little Brook! wilt  
bear  
Into the Avon, Avon to the tide  
Of Severn, Severn to the narrow seas, 10

Into main Ocean they, this deed accurst  
 An emblem yields to friends and enemies  
 How the bold Teacher's Doctrine, sanctified  
 By truth, shall spread, throughout the  
 world dispersed."

## XVIII.

## CORRUPTIONS OF THE HIGHER CLERGY.

"Woe to you, Prelates! rioting in ease  
 And cumbrous wealth—the shame of your  
 estate;  
 You, on whose progress dazzling trains  
 await  
 Of pompous horses; whom vain titles  
 please;  
 Who will be served by others on their  
 knees,  
 Yet will yourselves to God no service  
 pay;  
 Pastors who neither take nor point the  
 way  
 To Heaven; for, either lost in vanities  
 Ye have no skill to teach, or if ye know  
 And speak the word—"Alas! of  
 fearful things  
 'Tis the most fearful when the people's  
 eye  
 Abuse hath cleared from vain imaginings;  
 And taught the general voice to prophesy  
 Of Justice armed, and Pride to be laid  
 low.

## XIX.

## ABUSE OF MONASTIC POWER.

AND what is Penance with her knotted  
 thong;  
 Mortification, with the shirt of hair,  
 Wan cheek, and knees indurated with  
 prayer,  
 Vigils, and fastings rigorous as long;  
 If cloistered Avarice scruple not to wrong  
 The pious, humble, useful Secular,  
 And rob the people of his daily care,  
 Scorning that world whose blindness  
 makes her strong?  
 Inversion strange! that, unto One who  
 lives  
 For self, and struggles with himself alone,

The amplest share of heavenly favour  
 gives;  
 That to a Monk allots, both in the esteem  
 Of God and man, place higher than to him  
 Who on the good of others builds his  
 own!

## XX.

## MONASTIC VOLUPTUOUSNESS.

YET more,—round many a Convent's  
 blazing fire  
 Unhallowed threads of revelry are spun;  
 There Venus sits disguised like a Nun,—  
 While Bacchus, clothed in semblance of  
 a Friar,  
 Pours out his choicest beverage high and  
 higher  
 Sparkling, until it cannot choose but run  
 Over the bowl, whose silver lip hath won  
 An instant kiss of masterful desire—  
 To stay the precious waste. Through  
 every brain  
 The domination of the sprightly juice  
 Spreads high conceits to madding Fancy  
 dear,  
 Till the arched roof, with resolute abuse  
 Of its grave echoes, swells a choral strain  
 Whose votive burthen is—"OUR KING-  
 DOM'S HERE!"

## XXI.

## DISSOLUTION OF THE MONASTERIES.

TREATS come which no submission may  
 assuage,  
 No sacrifice avert, no power dispute;  
 The tapers shall be quenched, the belfries  
 mute,  
 And, 'mid their choirs unroofed by selfish  
 rage,  
 The warbling wren shall find a leafy cage;  
 The gadding bramble hang her purple  
 fruit;  
 And the green lizard and the gilded newt  
 Lead unmolested lives, and die of age.  
 The owl of evening and the woodland fox  
 For their abode the shrines of Waltham  
 choose:  
 Proud Glastonbury can no more refuse  
 To stoop her head before these desperate  
 shocks—

She whose high pomp displaced, as story  
tells,  
Arimathea Joseph's wattled cells.

## XXII.

## THE SAME SUBJECT.

THE lovely Nun (submissive, but more  
meek  
Through saintly habit than from effort  
due  
To unrelenting mandates that pursue  
With equal wrath the steps of strong and  
weak)  
Goes forth—unveiling timidly a cheek 5  
Suffused with blushes of celestial hue,  
While through the Convent's gate to open  
view  
Softly she glides, another home to seek.  
Not Iris, issuing from her cloudy shrine,  
An Apparition more divinely bright! 10  
Not more attractive to the dazzled sight  
Those watery glories, on the stormy brine  
Poured forth, while summer suns at dis-  
tance shine,  
And the green vales lie hushed in sober  
light!

## XXIII.

## CONTINUED.

YET many a Novice of the cloistral shade,  
And many chained by vows, with eager  
glee  
The warrant hail, exulting to be free;  
Like ships before whose keels, full long  
embayed  
In polar ice, propitious winds have made  
Unlooked-for outlet to an open sea, 6  
Their liquid world, for bold discovery,  
In all her quarters temptingly displayed!  
Hope guides the young; but when the old  
must pass  
The threshold, whither shall they turn to  
find 10  
The hospitality—the alms (alas!  
Alms may be needed) which that House  
bestowed?  
Can they, in faith and worship, train the  
mind  
To keep this new and questionable road?

## XXIV.

## SAINTS.

YE, too, must fly before a chasing hand,  
Angels and Saints, in every hamlet  
mourned!  
Ah! if the old idolatry be spurned,  
Let not your radiant Shapes desert the  
Land:  
Her adoration was not your demand, 5  
The fond heart proffered it—the servile  
heart;  
And therefore are ye summoned to de-  
part,  
Michael, and thou, St. George, whose  
flaming brand  
The Dragon quelled; and valiant Mar-  
garet 9  
Whose rival sword a like Opponent slew:  
And rapt Cecilia, seraph-haunted Queen  
Of harmony; and weeping Magdalene,  
Who in the penitential desert met  
Gales sweet as those that over Eden  
blew!

## XXV.

## THE VIRGIN.

MOTHER! whose virgin bosom was un-  
crost  
With the least shade of thought to sin  
allied;  
Woman! above all women glorified,  
Our tainted nature's solitary boast;  
Purer than foam on central ocean tost; 5  
Brighter than eastern skies at daybreak  
strewn  
With fancied roses, than the unblemished  
moon  
Before her wane begins on heaven's blue  
coast;  
Thy Image falls to earth. Yet some, I  
ween,  
Not unforgiven the suppliant knee might  
bend, 10  
As to a visible Power, in which did  
blend  
All that was mixed and reconciled in  
Thee  
Of mother's love with maiden purity,  
Of high with low, celestial with terrene!

## XXVI

APOLLOGY.

NOT utterly unworthy to endure  
 Was the supremacy of crafty Rome;  
 Age after age to the arch of Christendom  
 Aerial keystone haughtily secure;  
 Supremacy from Heaven transmitted  
     pure, 5  
 As many hold; and, therefore, to the  
     tomb  
 Pass, some through fire—and by the scaf-  
     fold some—  
 Like saintly Fisher, and unbending More.  
 “Lightly for both the bosom’s lord did  
     sit  
 Upon his throne;” unsoftened, undis-  
     mayed 10  
 By aught that mingled with the tragic  
     scene  
 Of pity or fear; and More’s gay genius  
     played  
 With the inoffensive sword of native wit,  
 Than the bare axe more luminous and  
     keen.

XXVII.

### IMAGINATIVE REGRETS.

DEEP is the lamentation ! Not alone  
From Sages justly honoured by mankind ;  
But from the ghostly tenants of the wind,  
Demons and Spirits, many a dolorous  
groan'  
Issues for that dominion overthrown : 5  
Proud Tiber grieves, and far-off Ganges,  
blind  
As his own worshippers : and Nile, re-  
clined  
Upon his monstrous urn, the farewell  
moan,  
Renews. Through every forest, cave, and  
den,  
Where frauds were hatched of old, hath  
sorrow past— 10  
Hangs o'er the Arabian Prophet's native  
Waste,  
Where once his airy helpers schemed and  
planned  
'Mid spectral lakes bemocking thirsty  
men,  
And stalking pillars built of fiery sand.

## XXVIII

## REFLECTIONS.

GRANT that by this unsparing hurricane  
Green leaves with yellow mixed are torn  
away,  
And goodly fruitage with the mother-  
spray ;  
'Twere madness—wished we, therefore, to  
detaim,  
With hands stretched forth in mollified  
disdain, 5  
The “trumpery” that ascends in bare  
display—  
Bulls, pardons, relics, cows black, white,  
and grey—  
Upwhirled, and flying o'er the ethereal  
plain  
Fast bound for Limbo Lake. And yet  
not choice  
But habit rules the unreflecting herd, 10  
And airy bonds are hardest to doun ;  
Hence, with the spiritual sovereignty  
transferred  
Unto itself, the Crown assumes a voice  
Of reckless mastery, hitherto unknown.

## XIX.

## TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE.

BUT, to outweigh all harm, the sacred  
Book,  
In dusty sequestration wrapt too long,  
Assumes the accents of our native tongue;  
And he who guides the plough, or wields  
the crook,  
With understanding spirit now may look  
Upon her records, listen to her song,      6  
And sift her laws—much wondering that  
the wrong,  
Which Faith has suffered, Heaven could  
calmly brook.  
Transcendent Boon ! noblest that earthly  
King  
Ever bestowed to equalize and bless      10  
Under the weight of mortal wretched-  
ness !  
But passions spread like plagues, and  
thousands wild  
With bigotry shall tread the Offering  
Beneath their feet, detested and defiled.

## XXX.

## THE POINT AT ISSUE.

[Composed ?.—Published 1827.]

For what contend the wise?—for no-  
 thing less  
 Than that the Soul, freed from the bonds  
 of Sense,  
 And to her God restored by evidence  
 Of things not seen, drawn forth from  
 their recess,  
 Root there, and not in forms, her holi-  
 ness;— 5  
 For Faith, which to the Patriarchs did  
 dispense  
 Sure guidance, ere a ceremonial fence  
 Was needful round men thirsting to  
 transgress;—  
 For Faith, more perfect still, with which  
 the Lord  
 Of all, himself a Spirit, in the youth 10  
 Of Christian aspiration, deigned to fill  
 The temples of their hearts who, with his  
 word  
 Informed, were resolute to do his will,  
 And worship him in spirit and in truth.

## XXXI.

## EDWARD VI.

"SWEET is the holiness of Youth"—so  
 felt  
 Time-honoured Chaucer speaking through  
 that Lay  
 By which the Prioress beguiled the way,  
 And many a Pilgrim's rugged heart did  
 melt.  
 Hadst thou, loved Bard! whose spirit  
 often dwelt 5  
 In the clear land of vision, but foreseen  
 King, child, and seraph, blended in the  
 mien  
 Of pious Edward kneeling as he knelt  
 In meek and simple infancy, what joy  
 For universal Christendom had thrilled  
 Thy heart! what hopes inspired thy  
 genius, skilled, 11  
 (O great Precursor, genuine morning Star)  
 The lucid shafts of reason to employ,  
 Piercing the Papal darkness from afar!

## XXXII.

EDWARD SIGNING THE WARRANT FOR  
 THE EXECUTION OF JOAN OF KENT.

The tears of man in various measure  
 gush  
 From various sources; gently overflow  
 From blissful transport some—from clefts  
 of woe  
 Some with ungovernable impulse rush;  
 And some, coeval with the earliest blush  
 Of infant passion, scarcely dare to show 6  
 Their pearly lustre—coming but to go;  
 And some break forth when others' sor-  
 rows crush  
 The sympathising heart. Nor these, nor  
 yet  
 The noblest drops to admiration known,  
 To gratitude, to injuries forgiven— 11  
 Claim Heaven's regard like waters that  
 have wet  
 The innocent eyes of youthful Monarchs  
 driven  
 To pen the mandates nature doth disown.

## XXXIII.

## REVIVAL OF POPEERY.

[Composed ?.—Published 1827.]

The saintly Youth has ceased to rule,  
 disrowned  
 By unrelenting Death. O People keen  
 For change, to whom the new looks al-  
 ways green!  
 Rejoicing did they cast upon the ground  
 Their Gods of wood and stone; and, at  
 the sound 5  
 Of counter-proclamation, now are seen,  
 (Proud triumph is it for a sullen Queen!)  
 Lifting them up, the worship to confound  
 Of the Most High. Again do they in-  
 voke  
 The Creature, to the Creature glory  
 give; 10  
 Again with frankincense the altars smoke  
 Like those the Heathen served; and mass  
 is sung;  
 And prayer, man's rational prerogative,  
 Runs through blind channels of an un-  
 known tongue.

## XXXIV.

LATIMER AND RIDLEY.

[Composed ?.—Published 1827.]

How fast the Marian death-list is un-  
rolled!

See Latimer and Ridley in the might  
Of Faith stand coupled for a common  
fight!

One (like those prophets whom God sent  
of old)

Transfigured<sup>1</sup>, from this kindling hath  
foretold

A torch of inextinguishable light;  
The Other gains a confidence as bold;

And thus they foil their enemy's despise.  
The penal instruments, the shows of  
crime,

Are glorified while this once-mitred pair  
Of saintly Friends the "murderer's chain

partake,

Corded, and burning at the social stake:"  
Earth never witnessed object more sub-  
lime

In constancy, in fellowship more fair!

## XXXV.

CRANMER.

OUTSTRETCHING flameward his upbraided  
hand

(O God of mercy, may no earthly Seat  
Of judgment such presumptuous doom  
repeat!)

Amid the shuddering throng doth Cran-  
mer stand;

Firm as the stake to which with iron  
band

His frame is tied; firm from the naked  
feet

To the bare head. The victory is com-  
plete;

The shrouded Body to the Soul's com-  
mand

Answers with more than Indian forti-  
tude,

Through all her nerves with finer sense  
endued,

Till breath departs in blissful aspiration:

Then, 'mid the ghastly ruins of the fire,  
Behold the unalterable heart entire,  
Emblem of faith untouched, miraculous  
attestation<sup>2</sup>!

## XXXVI.

GENERAL VIEW OF THE TROUBLES OF  
THE REFORMATION.

AID, glorious Martyrs, from your fields  
of light,

Our mortal ken! Inspire a perfect trust  
(While we look round) that Heaven's de-  
crees are just:

Which few can hold committed to a fight  
That shows, ev'n on its better side, the  
might

Of proud Self-will, Rapacity, and Lust,  
'Mid clouds enveloped of polemic dust,

Which showers of blood seem rather to  
incite

Than to allay. Anathemas are hurled  
From both sides; veteran thunders (the  
brute test

Of truth) are met by fulminations new—  
Tartarean flags are caught at, and un-  
furled—

Friends strike at friends—the flying shall  
pursue—

And Victory sickens, ignorant where to  
rest!

## XXXVII.

ENGLISH REFORMERS IN EXILE.

SCATTERING, like birds escaped the fowl-  
er's net,

Some seek with timely flight a foreign  
strand;

Most happy, re-assembled in a land  
By dauntless Luther freed, could they  
forget

Their Country's woes. But scarcely have  
they met,

Partners in faith, and brothers in distress,  
Free to pour forth their common thank-  
fulness,

Ere hope declines:—their union is beset  
With speculative notions rashly sown,

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 922.

<sup>2</sup> For the belief in this fact, see the contem-  
porary Historians.

Whence thickly-sprouting growth of poi-  
 sonous weeds; 10  
 Their forms are broken staves; their  
 passionate, steeds  
 That master them. How enviably blest  
 Is he who can, by help of grace, enthrone  
 The peace of God within his single  
 breast!

## XXXVIII.

ELIZABETH.

HAIL, Virgin Queen! o'er many an en-  
 vious bar  
 Triumphant, snatched from many a trea-  
 cherous wile!  
 All hail, sage Lady, whom a grateful Isle  
 Hath blest, respiring from that dismal  
 war  
 Stilled by thy voice! But quickly from  
 afar 5  
 Defiance breathes with more malignant  
 aim;  
 And alien storms with home-bred fer-  
 ments claim  
 Portentous fellowship. Her silver car,  
 By sleepless prudence ruled, glides slow-  
 ly on;  
 Unhurt by violence, from menaced taint  
 Emerging pure, and seemingly more  
 bright: 11  
 Ah! wherefore yields it to a foul con-  
 straint  
 Black as the clouds its beams dispersed,  
 while shone,  
 By men and angels blest, the glorious  
 light?

## XXXIX.

EMINENT REFORMERS.

METHINKS that I could trip o'er heaviest  
 soil,  
 Light as a buoyant bark from wave to  
 wave,  
 Were mine the trusty staff that JEWEL  
 gave  
 To youthful HOOKER, in familiar style  
 The gift exalting, and with playful  
 smile<sup>1</sup>: 5

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 922.

For thus equipped, and bearing on his  
 head  
 The Donor's farewell blessing, can he  
 dread  
 Tempest, or length of way, or weight of  
 toil?—  
 More sweet than odours caught by him  
 who sails  
 Near spicy shores of Araby the blest, 10  
 A thousand times more exquisitely sweet,  
 The freight of holy feeling which we meet,  
 In thoughtful moments, wafted by the  
 gales  
 From fields where good men walk, or  
 bowers wherein they rest.

## XL.

THE SAME.

HOLY and heavenly Spirits as they are,  
 Spotless in life, and eloquent as wise,  
 With what entire affection do they prize  
 Their Church reformed! labouring with  
 earnest care  
 To baffle all that may her strength im-  
 pair; 5  
 That Church, the unperturbed Gospel's  
 seat;  
 In their afflictions a divine retreat;  
 Source of their liveliest hope, and tender-  
 est prayer!—  
 The truth exploring with an equal mind,  
 In doctrine and communion they have  
 sought 10  
 Firmly between the two extremes to  
 steer;  
 But theirs the wise man's ordinary lot,  
 To trace right courses for the stubborn  
 blind,  
 And prophesy to ears that will not hear.

## XLI.

DISTRACTIONS.

MEN, who have ceased to reverence, soon  
 defy  
 Their forefathers; lo! sects are formed,  
 and split  
 With morbid restlessness!—the ecstatic fit  
 Spreads wide; though special mysteries  
 multiply,

*The Saints must govern* is their common  
cry; 5  
And so they labour, deeming Holy Writ  
Disgraced by aught that seems content to  
sit  
Beneath the roof of settled Modesty.  
The Romanist exults; fresh hope he  
draws  
From the confusion, craftily incites 10  
The overweening, personates the mad—  
To heap disgust upon the worthier Cause:  
Totters the Throne; the new-born Church  
is sad,  
For every wave against her peace unites.

## XLII.

## GUNPOWDER PLOT.

FEAR hath a hundred eyes that all agree  
To plague her beating heart; and there is  
one  
(Nor idlest that!) which holds com-  
munion  
With things that were not, yet were  
meant to be.  
Aghast within its gloomy cavity 5  
That eye (which sees as if fulfilled and done  
Crimes that might stop the motion of the  
sun)  
Beholds the horrible catastrophe  
Of an assembled Senate unredeemed  
From subterraneous Treason's darkling  
power: 10  
Merciless act of sorrow infinite!  
Worse than the product of that dismal  
night,  
When gushing, copious as a thunder-  
shower,  
The blood of Huguenots through Paris  
streamed.

## XLIII.

## ILLUSTRATION.

THE JUNG-FRAU AND THE FALL OF THE  
RHINE NEAR SCHAFFHAUSEN.  
THE Virgin-Mountain<sup>1</sup>, wearing like a  
Queen  
A brilliant crown of everlasting snow,

<sup>1</sup> The Jung-frau.

Sheds ruin from her sides; and men  
below  
Wonder that aught of aspect so serene  
Can link with desolation. Smooth and  
green, 5  
And seeming, at a little distance, slow.  
The waters of the Rhine; but on they  
go  
Fretting and whitening, keener and more  
keen;  
Till madness seizes on the whole wide  
Flood,  
Turned to a fearful Thing whose nostrils  
breathe 10  
Blasts of tempestuous smoke—wherewith  
he tries  
To hide himself, but only magnifies;  
And doth in more conspicuous torment  
writhe,  
Deafening the region in his ireful mood.

## XLIV.

## TROUBLES OF CHARLES THE FIRST.

EVEN such the contrast that, where'er we  
move,  
To the mind's eye Religion doth pre-  
sent;  
Now with her own deep quietness con-  
tent;  
Then, like the mountain, thundering from  
above  
Against the ancient pine-trees of the  
grove 5  
And the Land's humblest comforts. Now  
her mood  
Recalls the transformation of the flood,  
Whose rage the gentle skies in vain re-  
prove,  
Earth cannot check. O terrible excess  
Of headstrong will! Can this be Piety?  
No—some fierce Maniac hath usurped her  
name; 11  
And scourges England struggling to be  
free:  
Her peace destroyed! her hopes a wilder-  
ness!  
Her blessings cursed—her glory turned to  
shame!

## XLV.

LAUD<sup>1</sup>.

PREJUDGED by foes determined not to spare,  
An old weak Man for vengeance thrown  
aside,

Laud, "in the painful art of dying" tried,  
(Like a poor bird entangled in a snare  
Whose heart still flutters, though his  
wings forbear

To stir in useless struggle) hath relied 5  
On hope that conscious innocence supplied,

And in his prison breathes celestial air.  
Why tarries then thy chariot? Wherefore  
stay,

O Death! the ensanguined yet triumphant  
wheels,

Which thou prepar'st, full often, to convey 10  
(What time a State with maddening faction  
reels)

The Saint or Patriot to the world that heals  
All wounds, all perturbations doth allay?

## XLVI.

## AFFLICTIONS OF ENGLAND.

HARP! couldst thou venture, on thy  
boldest string,

The faintest note to echo which the blast  
Caught from the hand of Moses as it  
passed

O'er Sinai's top, or from the Shepherd-  
king,

Early awake, by Siloa's brook, to sing 5  
Of dread Jehovah; then should wood and  
waste

Hear also of that name, and mercy cast  
Off to the mountains, like a covering  
Of which the Lord was weary. Weep,  
oh! weep,

Weep with the good, beholding King and  
Priest 10

Despised by that stern God to whom they  
raise

Their suppliant hands; but holy is the  
feast

He keepeth; like the firmament his ways:  
His statutes like the chambers of the deep.

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 922.

## PART III.

FROM THE RESTORATION TO THE PRE-  
SENT TIMES.

## I.

I SAW the figure of a lovely Maid  
Seated alone beneath a darksome tree,  
Whose fondly-overhanging canopy  
Set off her brightness with a pleasing shade.  
No Spirit was she; *that* my heart be-  
trayed,

For she was one I loved exceedingly; 5  
But while I gazed in tender reverie  
(Or was it sleep that with my Fancy  
played?)

The bright corporeal presence—form and  
face—

Remaining still distinct grew thin and  
rare, 10

Like sunny mist;—at length the golden  
hair,

Shape, limbs, and heavenly features, keep-  
ing pace

Each with the other in a lingering race  
Of dissolution, melted into air.

## II.

## PATRIOTIC SYMPATHIES.

LAST night, without a voice, that Vision  
spake

Fear to my Soul, and sadness which  
might seem

Wholly dissevered from our present  
theme;

Yet, my beloved Country! I partake  
Of kindred agitations for thy sake; 5

Thou, too, dost visit oft my midnight  
dream;

Thy glory meets me with the earliest  
beam

Of light, which tells that Morning is  
awake.

If aught impair thy beauty or destroy,  
Or but forbode destruction, I deplore 10

With filial love the sad vicissitude;  
If thou hast fallen, and righteous Hea-  
ven restore

The prostrate, then my spring-time is  
renewed,

And sorrow bartered for exceeding joy.

## III.

CHARLES THE SECOND.

WHO comes—with rapture greeted, and  
caressed

With frantic love—his kingdom to regain?  
Him Virtue's Nurse, Adversity, in vain  
Received, and fostered in her iron breast:  
For all she taught of hardest and of best,  
Or would have taught, by discipline of pain  
And long privation, now dissolves again,  
Or is remembered only to give zest  
To wantonness.—Away, Circean revels!  
But for what gain? if England soon  
must sink 10

Into a gulf which all distinction levels—  
That bigotry may swallow the good name,  
And, with that draught, the life-blood:  
misery, shame,  
By Poets loathed; from which Historians  
shrink!

## IV.

LATITUDINARIANISM.

YET Truth is keenly sought for, and the  
wind

Charged with rich words poured out in  
thought's defence;

Whether the Church inspire that elo-  
quence,

Or a Platonic Piety confined

To the sole temple of the inward mind; 5

And One there is who builds immortal lays,

Though doomed to tread in solitary ways,

Darkness before and danger's voice behind;

Yet not alone, nor helpless to repel

Sad thoughts; for from above the starry  
sphere 10

Come secrets, whispered nightly to his ear;

And the pure spirit of celestial light

Shines through his soul—"that he may  
see and tell

Of things invisible to mortal sight."

## V.

WALTON'S BOOK OF LIVES.

THERE are no colours in the fairest sky  
So fair as these. The feather, whence the  
pen

Was shaped that traced the lives of these  
good men,

Dropped from an Angel's wing. With  
moistened eye

We read of faith and purest charity 5

In Statesman, Priest, and humble Citizen:

Oh could we copy their mild virtues, then

What joy to live, what blessedness to  
die!

Methinks their very names shine still and  
bright;

Apart—like glow-worms on a summer  
night; 10

Or lonely tapers when from far they fling

A guiding ray; or seen—like stars on high,

Satellites burning in a lucid ring

Around meek Walton's heavenly memory.

## VI.

CLERICAL INTEGRITY.

NOR shall the eternal roll of praise reject

Those Unconforming; whom one rigorous  
day

Drives from their Cures, a voluntary prey  
To poverty, and grief, and disrespect,

And some to want—as if by tempests  
wrecked 5

On a wild coast; how destitute! did They

Feel not that Conscience never can be-  
tray,

That peace of mind is Virtue's sure effect.  
Their altars they forego, their homes they

quit,  
Fields which they love, and paths they

daily trod, 10

And cast the future upon Providence;

As men the dictate of whose inward sense

Outweighs the world; whom self-deceiving  
wit

Lures not from what they deem the cause  
of God.

## VII.

PERSECUTION OF THE SCOTTISH COVE-  
NANTERS.

[Composed ?.—Published 1827.]

WHEN Alpine Vales threw forth a sup-  
pliant cry,

The majesty of England interposed

And the sword stopped; the bleeding

wounds were closed;

And Faith preserved her ancient purity.

How little boots that precedent of good, 5  
 Scorned or forgotten, Thou canst testify,  
 For England's shame, O Sister Realm!  
     from wood,  
 Mountain, and moor, and crowded street,  
     where lie  
 The headless martyrs of the Covenant,  
 Slain by Compatriot-protestants that  
     draw 10  
 From councils senseless as intolerant  
 Their warrant. Bodies fall by wild sword-  
     law;  
 But who would force the Soul tilts with a  
     straw  
 Against a Champion cased in adamant.

## VIII.

## ACQUITTAL OF THE BISHOPS.

A VOICE, from long-expecting thousands  
     sent,  
 Shatters the air, and troubles tower and  
     spire;  
 For Justice hath absolved the innocent,  
 And Tyranny is balked of her desire:  
 Up, down, the busy Thames—rapid as  
     fire 5  
 Coursing a train of gunpowder—it went,  
 And transport finds in every street a vent,  
 Till the whole City rings like one vast  
     quire.  
 The Fathers urge the People to be still,  
 With outstretched hands and earnest  
     speech—in vain! 10  
 Yea, many, haply wont to entertain  
 Small reverence for the mitre's offices,  
 And to Religion's self no friendly will,  
 A Prelate's blessing ask on bended knees.

## IX.

## WILLIAM THE THIRD.

CALM as an under-current, strong to draw  
 Millions of waves into itself, and run,  
 From sea to sea, impervious to the sun  
 And ploughing storm, the spirit of Nassau  
     awe 5  
 Swayed, and thereby enabled to contend  
 With the wide world's commotions) from  
     its end

Swerves not—diverted by a casual law,  
 Had mortal action e'er a nobler scope?  
 The Hero comes to liberate, not defy; 10  
 And while he marches on with steadfast  
     hope,  
 Conqueror beloved! expected anxiously!  
 The vacillating Bondman of the Pope  
 Shrinks from the verdict of his steadfast  
     eye.

## X.

OBLIGATIONS OF CIVIL TO RELIGIOUS  
LIBERTY.

UNGRATEFUL Country, if thou e'er forget  
 The sons who for thy civil rights have  
     bled!  
 How, like a Roman, Sidney bowed his  
     head,  
 And Russell's milder blood the scaffold  
     wet;  
 But these had fallen for profitless regret 5  
 Had not thy holy Church her champions  
     bred,  
 And claims from other worlds inspirited  
 The star of Liberty to rise. Nor yet  
 (Grave this within thy heart!) if spiritual  
     things  
 Be lost, through apathy, or scorn, or fear,  
 Shalt thou thy humbler franchises sup-  
     port, 11  
 However hardly won or justly dear:  
 What came from heaven to heaven by  
     nature clings,  
 And, if dissevered thence, its course is  
     short.

## XI.

## SACHEVEREL.

[Composed ?.—Published 1827.]

A SUDDEN conflict rises from the swell  
 Of a proud slavery met by tenets strained  
 In Liberty's behalf. Fears, true or  
     feigned,  
 Spread through all ranks; and lo! the  
     Sentinel  
 Who loudest rang his pulpit 'larum bell,  
 Stands at the Bar, absolved by female  
     eyes 6  
 Mingling their glances with grave flat-  
     teries

Lavished on *Him*—that England may  
 rebel  
 Against her ancient virtue. HIGH and  
 Low,  
 Watchwords of Party, on all tongues are  
 rife; 10  
 As if a Church, though sprung from  
 heaven, must owe  
 To opposites and fierce extremes her  
 life,—  
 Not to the golden mean, and quiet flow  
 Of truths that soften hatred, temper  
 strife.

## XII.

[Composed ?.—Published 1827.]

Down a swift Stream, thus far, a bold  
 design  
 Have we pursued, with livelier stir of  
 heart  
 Than his who sees, borne forward by the  
 Rhine,  
 The living landscapes greet him, and  
 depart;  
 Sees spires fast sinking—up again to start!  
 And strives the towers to number, that  
 recline 6  
 O'er the dark steep, or on the horizon line  
 Striding with shattered crests his eye  
 athwart.  
 So have we hurried on with troubled  
 pleasure:  
 Henceforth, as on the bosom of a stream  
 That slackens, and spreads wide a watery  
 gleam, 11  
 We, nothing loth a lingering course to  
 measure,  
 May gather up our thoughts, and mark at  
 leisure  
 How widely spread the interests of our  
 theme.

## XIII.

ASPECTS OF CHRISTIANITY IN AMERICA.

## I.—THE PILGRIM FATHERS.

[Composed 1842.—Published: vol. of 1842.]

WELL worthy to be magnified are they  
 Who, with sad hearts, of friends and  
 country took  
 A last farewell, their loved abodes forsook,

And hallowed ground in which their  
 fathers lay;  
 Then to the new-found World explored  
 their way, 5  
 That so a Church, unforced, uncalled to  
 brook  
 Ritual restraints, within some sheltering  
 nook  
 Her Lord might worship and his word  
 obey  
 In freedom. Men they were who could  
 not bend;  
 Blest Pilgrims, surely, as they took for  
 guide 10  
 A will by sovereign Conscience sancti-  
 fied;  
 Blest while their Spirits from the woods  
 ascend  
 Along a Galaxy that knows no end,  
 But in His glory who for Sinners died.

## XIV.

## II. CONTINUED.

[Composed 1842.—Published: vol. of 1842.]

FROM Rite and Ordinance abused they  
 fled  
 To Wilds where both were utterly un-  
 known;  
 But not to them had Providence fore-  
 shown  
 What benefits are missed, what evils  
 bred,  
 In worship neither raised nor limited 5  
 Save by Self-will. Lo! from that distant  
 shore,  
 For Rite and Ordinance, Piety is led  
 Back to the Land those Pilgrims left of  
 yore,  
 Led by her own free choice. So Truth  
 and Love  
 By Conscience governed do their steps  
 retrace.— 10  
 Fathers! your Virtues, such the power  
 of grace,  
 Their spirit, in your Children, thus ap-  
 prove.  
 Transcendent over time, unbound by  
 place,  
 Concord and Charity in circles move.

## XV.

## III. CONCLUDED.—AMERICAN EPISCOPACY.

[Composed 1842.—Published: vol. of 1842.]

PATRIOTS informed with Apostolic light  
 Were they who, when their Country had  
 been freed,  
 Bowing with reverence to the ancient  
 creed,  
 Fixed on the frame of England's Church  
 their sight,  
 And strove in filial love to reunite 5  
 What force had severed. Thence they  
 fetched the seed  
 Of Christian unity, and won a meed  
 Of praise from Heaven. To Thee, O  
 saintly WHITE,  
 Patriarch of a wide-spreading family,  
 Remotest lands and unborn times shall  
 turn, 10  
 Whether they would restore or build—to  
 Thee,  
 As one who rightly taught how zeal should  
 burn,  
 As one who drew from out Faith's holiest  
 urn  
 The purest stream of patient Energy.

## XVI.

[Composed ?.—Published 1845.]

BISHOPS and Priests, blessed are ye, if  
 deep  
 (As yours above all offices is high)  
 Deep in your hearts the sense of duty lie;  
 Charged as ye are by Christ to feed and  
 keep  
 From wolves your portion of His chosen  
 sheep: 5  
 Labouring as ever in your Master's sight,  
 Making your hardest task your best  
 delight,  
 What perfect glory ye in Heaven shall  
 reap!—  
 But in the solemn Office which ye sought  
 And undertook premonished, if unsound  
 Your practice prove, faithless though but  
 in thought, 11  
 Bishops and Priests, think what a gulf  
 profound

Awaits you then, if they were rightly  
 taught  
 Who framed the Ordinance by your lives  
 disowned!

## XVII.

## PLACES OF WORSHIP.

As star that shines dependent upon star  
 Is to the sky while we look up in love;  
 As to the deep fair ships which though  
 they move  
 Seem fixed, to eyes that watch them from  
 afar;  
 As to the sandy desert fountains are, 5  
 With palm-groves shaded at wide inter-  
 vals,  
 Whose fruit around the sun-burnt Native  
 falls  
 Of roving tired or desultory war—  
 Such to this British Isle her christian  
 Fanes,  
 Each linked to each for kindred services;  
 Her Spires, her Steeple-towers with  
 glittering vanes 11  
 Far-kenned, her Chapels lurking among  
 trees,  
 Where a few villagers on bended knees  
 Find solace which a busy world disdains.

## XVIII.

## PASTORAL CHARACTER.

A GENIAL hearth, a hospitable board,  
 And a refined rusticity, belong  
 To the neat mansion, where, his flock  
 among,  
 The learned Pastor dwells, their watchful  
 Lord.  
 Though meek and patient as a sheathed  
 sword: 5  
 Though pride's least lurking thought  
 appear a wrong  
 To human kind; though peace be on his  
 tongue,  
 Gentleness in his heart—can earth afford  
 Such genuine state, pre-eminence so free,  
 As when, arrayed in Christ's authority, 10  
 He from the pulpit lifts his awful hand;  
 Conjures, implores, and labours all he can  
 For re-subjecting to divine command  
 The stubborn spirit of rebellious man?

## XIX.

## THE LITURGY.

YES, if the intensities of hope and fear  
Attract us still, and passionate exercise  
Of lofty thoughts, the way before us lies  
Distinct with signs, through which in set  
career,

As through a zodiac, moves the ritual  
year

Of England's Church; stupendous mys-  
teries!

Which whoso travels in her bosom eyes,  
As he approaches them, with solemn  
cheer.

Upon that circle traced from sacred story  
We only dare to cast a transient glance,  
Trusting in hope that Others may ad-  
vance

With mind intent upon the King of  
Glory,

From his mild advent till his countenance  
Shall dissipate the seas and mountains  
hoary.

## XX.

## BAPTISM.

[Composed ?.—Published 1827.]

DEAR be the Church that, watching o'er  
the needs

Of Infancy, provides a timely shower  
Whose virtue changes to a christian  
Flower

A Growth from sinful Nature's bed of  
weeds!—

Fitliest beneath the sacred roof proceeds 5  
The ministration; while parental Love  
Looks on, and Grace descendeth from  
above

As the high service pledges now, now  
pleads.

There, should vain thoughts outspread  
their wings and fly

To meet the coming hours of festal mirth,  
The tombs—which hear and answer that  
brief cry,

The Infant's notice of his second birth—  
Recall the wandering Soul to sympathy  
With what man hopes from Heaven, yet  
fears from Earth.

## XXI.

## SPONSORS.

[Composed ?.—Published 1832.]

FATHER! to God himself we cannot give  
A holier name! then lightly do not bear  
Both names conjoined, but of thy spiritual  
care

Be duly mindful: still more sensitive  
Do Thou, in truth a second Mother, strive  
Against disheartening custom, that by  
Thee

Watched, and with love and pious in-  
dustry

Tended at need, the adopted Plant may  
thrive

For everlasting bloom. Benign and pure  
This Ordinance, whether loss it would  
supply,

Prevent omission, help deficiency,  
Or seek to make assurance doubly sure.  
Shame if the consecrated Vow be found  
An idle form, the Word an empty sound!

## XXII.

## CATECHISING.

FROM Little down to Least, in due degree,  
Around the Pastor, each in new-wrought  
vest,

Each with a vernal posy at his breast,  
We stood, a trembling, earnest Company!  
With low soft murmur, like a distant bee,  
Some spake, by thought-perplexing fears  
betrayed;

And some a bold unerring answer made:  
How fluttered then thy anxious heart for  
me,

Beloved Mother! Thou whose happy  
hand

Had bound the flowers I wore, with faith-  
ful tie:

Sweet flowers! at whose inaudible com-  
mand

Her countenance, phantom-like, doth re-  
appear:

O lost too early for the frequent tear,  
And ill requited by this heartfelt sigh!

<sup>1</sup> See Bishop Wordsworth's *Memoirs of Wil-  
liam Wordsworth*, I., 8; and *The Prelude*,  
Bk. V., ll. 256-293.—Ed.

## XXIII.

## CONFIRMATION.

[Composed ?.—Published 1827.]

THE Young-ones gathered in from hill  
and dale,  
With holiday delight on every brow:  
'Tis past away; far other thoughts pre-  
vail;  
For they are taking the baptismal Vow  
Upon their conscious selves; their own  
lips speak 5  
The solemn promise. Strongest sinews  
fail,  
And many a blooming, many a lovely,  
cheek  
Under the holy fear of God turns pale;  
While on each head his lawn-robed  
servant lays  
An apostolic hand, and with prayer seals  
The Covenant. The Omnipotent will  
raise 11  
Their feeble Souls; and bear with *his*  
regrets,  
Who, looking round the fair assemblage,  
feels  
That ere the Sun goes down their child-  
hood sets.

## XXIV.

## CONFIRMATION CONTINUED.

[Composed ?.—Published 1827.]

I saw a Mother's eye intensely bent  
Upon a Maiden trembling as she knelt;  
In and for whom the pious Mother felt  
Things that we judge of by a light too  
faint:  
Tell, if ye may, some star-crowned Muse,  
or Saint! 5  
Tell what rushed in, from what she was  
relieved—  
Then, when her Child the hallowing touch  
received,  
And such vibration through the Mother  
went  
That tears burst forth amain. Did gleams  
appear?  
Opened a vision of that blissful place 10

Where dwells a Sister-child? And was  
power given  
Part of her lost One's glory back to trace  
Even to this Rite? For thus *She* knelt,  
and, ere  
The summer-leaf had faded, passed to  
Heaven.

## XXV.

## SACRAMENT.

[Composed ?.—Published 1827.]

By chain yet stronger must the Soul be  
tied:  
One duty more, last stage of this ascent,  
Brings to thy food, mysterious Sacra-  
ment!  
The Offspring, haply at the Parent's side;  
But not till They, with all that do abide 5  
In Heaven, have lifted up their hearts to  
laud  
And magnify the glorious name of God,  
Fountain of Grace, whose Son for sinners  
died.  
Ye, who have duly weighed the summons,  
pause  
No longer: ye, whom to the saving rite 10  
The Altar calls; come early under laws  
That can secure for you a path of light  
Through gloomiest shade; put on (nor  
dread its weight)  
Armour divine, and conquer in your  
cause!

## XXVI.

## THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY.

[Composed 1842.—Published 1845.]

THE Vested Priest before the Altar  
stands:  
Approach, come gladly, ye prepared, in  
sight  
Of God and chosen friends, your troth to  
plight  
With the symbolic ring, and willing  
hands  
Solemnly joined. Now sanctify the bands  
O Father!—to the Espoused thy blessing  
give, 6  
That mutually assisted they may live

Obedient, as here taught, to thy commands.

So prays the Church, to consecrate a Vow  
"The which would endless matrimony  
make;"

Union that shadows forth and doth partake

A mystery potent human love to endow  
With heavenly, each more prized for the  
other's sake;

Weep not, meek Bride! uplift thy timid  
brow.

## XXVII.

## THANKSGIVING AFTER CHILDBIRTH.

[Composed 1842 (?).—Published 1845.]

WOMAN! the Power who left His throne  
on high,

And deigned to wear the robe of flesh we  
wear,

The Power that thro' the straits of  
Infancy

Did pass dependent on maternal care,  
His own humanity with Thee will share, 5  
Pleased with the thanks that in His  
People's eye

Thou offerest up for safe Delivery  
From Childbirth's perilous throes. And  
should the Heir

Of thy fond hopes hereafter walk inclined  
To courses fit to make a mother rue 10  
That ever he was born, a glance of mind  
Cast upon this observance may renew  
A better will; and, in the imagined view  
Of thee thus kneeling, safety he may find.

## XXVIII.

## VISITATION OF THE SICK.

[Composed 1842 (?).—Published 1845.]

THE Sabbath bells renew the inviting  
peal;

Glad music! yet there be that, worn with  
pain

And sickness, listen where they long have  
lain,

In sadness listen. With maternal zeal  
Inspired, the Church sends ministers to  
kneel

Beside the afflicted; to sustain with  
prayer,

And soothe the heart confession hath laid  
bare—

That pardon, from God's throne, may set  
its seal

On a true Penitent. When breath departs  
From one disburthened so, so comforted,  
His Spirit Angels greet; and ours be  
hope 11

That, if the Sufferer rise from his sick-  
bed,

Hence he will gain a firmer mind, to cope  
With a bad world, and foil the Tempter's  
arts.

## XXIX.

## THE COMMINATION SERVICE.

[Composed 1842 (?).—Published 1845.]

SHUN not this Rite, neglected, yea ab-  
horred,

By some of unreflecting mind, as calling  
Man to curse man, (thought monstrous  
and appalling).

Go thou and hear the threatenings of the  
Lord;

Listening within his Temple see his sword  
Unsheathed in wrath to strike the of-  
fender's head, 6

Thy own, if sorrow for thy sin be dead,  
Guilt unrepented, pardon unimplored.

Two aspects bears Truth needful for  
salvation;

Who knows not *that*?—yet would this  
delicate age 10

Look only on the Gospel's brighter page:  
Let light and dark duly our thoughts  
employ;

So shall the fearful words of Commination  
Yield timely fruit of peace and love and  
joy.

## XXX.

## FORMS OF PRAYER AT SEA.

[Composed 1842 (?).—Published 1845.]

To kneeling Worshippers no earthly floor  
Gives holier invitation than the deck

Of a storm-shattered Vessel saved from  
Wreck

(When all that Man could do availed no more)  
 By Him who raised the Tempest and restrains:  
 Happy the crew who this have felt, and pour  
 Forth for His mercy, as the Church ordains,  
 Solemn thanksgiving. Nor will *they* implore  
 In vain who, for a rightful cause, give breath  
 To words the Church prescribes aiding the lip  
 For the heart's sake, ere ship with hostile ship  
 Encounters, armed for work of pain and death.  
 Suppliants! the God to whom your cause ye trust  
 Will listen, and ye know that He is just.

## XXXI.

## FUNERAL SERVICE.

[Composed 1842.—Published 1845.]

FROM the Baptismal hour, thro' weal and woe,  
 The Church extends her care to thought and deed;  
 Nor quits the Body when the Soul is freed,  
 The mortal weight cast off to be laid low.  
 Blest Rite for him who hears in faith,  
 "I know  
 That my Redeemer liveth,"—hears each word  
 That follows—striking on some kindred chord  
 Deep in the thankful heart;—yet tears will flow.  
 Man is as grass that springeth up at morn,  
 Grows green, and is cut down and withereth  
 Ere nightfall—truth that well may claim a sigh,  
 Its natural echo; but hope comes reborn  
 At Jesu's bidding. We rejoice, "O Death,  
 Where is thy Sting?—O Grave, where is thy Victory?"

## XXXII.

RURAL CEREMONY<sup>1</sup>.

CLOSING the sacred Book which long has fed  
 Our meditations, give we to a day  
 Of annual joy one tributary lay;  
 This day, when, forth by rustic music led,  
 The village Children, while the sky is red  
 With evening lights, advance in long array  
 Through the still churchyard, each with garland gay,  
 That, carried sceptre-like, o'ertops the head  
 Of the proud Bearer. To the wide church-door,  
 Charged with these offerings which their fathers bore  
 For decoration in the Papal time,  
 The innocent Procession softly moves:—  
 The spirit of Laud is pleased in heaven's pure clime,  
 And Hooker's voice the spectacle approves!

## XXXIII.

## REGRETS.

WOULD that our scrupulous Sires had dared to leave  
 Less scanty measure of those graceful rites  
 And usages, whose due return invites  
 A stir of mind too natural to deceive;  
 Giving to Memory help when she would weave  
 A crown for Hope!—I dread the boasted lights  
 That all too often are but fiery blights,  
 Killing the bud o'er which in vain we grieve.  
 Go, seek, when Christmas snows discomfort bring,  
 The counter Spirit found in some gay church  
 Green with fresh holly, every pew a perch

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 923.

In which the linnet or the thrush might  
sing,  
Merry and loud and safe from prying  
search,  
Strains offered only to the genial Spring.

## XXXIV.

## MUTABILITY.

FROM low to high doth dissolution climb,  
And sink from high to low, along a  
scale  
Of awful notes, whose concord shall not  
fail;  
A musical but melancholy chime,  
Which they can hear who meddle not  
with crime,  
Nor avarice, nor over-anxious care.  
Truth fails not; but her outward forms  
that bear  
The longest date do melt like frosty rime,  
That in the morning whitened hill and  
plain  
And is no more; drop like the tower  
sublime  
Of yesterday, which royally did wear  
His crown of weeds, but could not even  
sustain  
Some casual shout that broke the silent  
air,  
Or the unimaginable touch of Time.

## XXXV.

## OLD ABBEYS.

MONASTIC Domes! following my down-  
ward way,  
Untouched by due regret I marked your  
fall!  
Now, ruin, beauty, ancient stillness, all  
Dispose to judgments temperate as we lay  
On our past selves in life's declining day:  
For as, by discipline of Time made wise,  
We learn to tolerate the infirmities  
And faults of others—gently as he may,  
So with our own the mild Instructor deals,  
Teaching us to forget them or forgive.  
Perversely curious, then, for hidden ill  
Why should we break Time's charitable  
seals?  
Once ye were holy, ye are holy still;  
Your spirit freely let me drink, and live.

## XXXVI.

## EMIGRANT FRENCH CLERGY.

[Composed ?.—Published 1827.]

EVEN while I speak, the sacred roofs of  
France  
Are shattered into dust; and self-exiled  
From altars threatened, levelled, or de-  
filed,  
Wander the Ministers of God, as chance  
Opens a way for life, or consonance  
Of faith invites. More welcome to no land  
The fugitives than to the British strand,  
Where priest and layman with the vigil-  
ance  
Of true compassion greet them. Creed  
and test  
Vanish before the unreserved embrace  
Of catholic humanity:—distress  
They came,—and, while the moral tem-  
pest roars  
Throughout the Country they have left,  
our shores  
Give to their Faith a fearless resting-  
place.

## XXXVII.

## CONGRATULATION.

THUS all things lead to Charity, secured  
By THEM who blessed the soft and happy  
gale  
That landward urged the great Deliverer's  
sail,  
Till in the sunny bay his fleet was  
moored!  
Propitious hour! had we, like them,  
endured  
Sore stress of apprehension<sup>1</sup>, with a mind  
Sickened by injuries, dreading worse de-  
signed,  
From month to month trembling and un-  
assured,  
How had we then rejoiced! But we have  
felt,  
As a loved substance, their futurity:  
Good, which they dared not hope for, we  
have seen;

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 923.

A State whose generous will through  
earth is dealt;  
A State—which, balancing herself be-  
tween  
Licence and slavish order, dares be free.

## XXXVIII.

## NEW CHURCHES.

BUT liberty, and triumphs on the Main,  
And laurelled armies, not to be with-  
stood—  
What serve they? if, on transitory good  
Intent, and sedulous of abject gain,  
The State (ah, surely not preserved in  
vain!)<sup>5</sup>  
Forbear to shape due channels which the  
Flood  
Of sacred truth may enter—till it brood  
O'er the wide realm, as o'er the Egyptian  
plain  
The all-sustaining Nile. No more—the  
time  
Is conscious of her want; through  
England's bounds,<sup>10</sup>  
In rival haste, the wished-for Temples  
rise!  
I hear their sabbath bells' harmonious  
chime  
Float on the breeze—the heavenliest of  
all sounds  
That vale or hill prolongs or multiplies!

## XXXIX.

## CHURCH TO BE ERECTED.

BE this the chosen site; the virgin sod,  
Moistened from age to age by dewy eve,  
Shall disappear, and grateful earth receive  
The corner-stone from hands that build  
to God.  
Yon reverend hawthorns, hardened to  
the rod<sup>5</sup>  
Of winter storms, yet budding cheerfully;  
Those forest oaks of Druid memory,  
Shall long survive, to shelter the Abode  
Of genuine Faith. Where, haply, 'mid  
this band  
Of daisies, shepherds safe of yore and  
wove<sup>10</sup>  
May-garlands, there let the holy altar  
stand

For kneeling adoration;—while—above,  
Broods, visibly portrayed, the mystic  
Dove,  
That shall protect from blasphemy the  
Land.

## XL.

## CONTINUED.

MINE ear has rung, my spirit sunk sub-  
dued,  
Sharing the strong emotion of the crowd,  
When each pale brow to dread hosannas  
bowed  
While clouds of incense mounting veiled  
the rood,  
That glimmered like a pine-tree dimly  
viewed<sup>5</sup>  
Through Alpine vapours. Such appal-  
ling rite  
Our Church prepares not, trusting to the  
might  
Of simple truth with grace divine imbued;  
Yet will we not conceal the precious  
Cross,  
Like men ashamed: the Sun with his  
first smile<sup>10</sup>  
Shall greet that symbol crowning the low  
Pile:  
And the fresh air of incense-breathing morn  
Shall wooingly embrace it; and green  
moss  
Creep round its arms through centuries  
unborn.

## XLI.

## NEW CHURCHYARD.

THE encircling ground, in native turf  
arrayed,  
Is now by solemn consecration given  
To social interests, and, to favouring  
Heaven;  
And where the rugged colts their gambols  
played,  
And wild deer bounded through the  
forest glade,<sup>5</sup>  
Unchecked as when by merry Outlaw  
driven,  
Shall hymns of praise resound at morn  
and even;  
And soon, full soon, the lonely Sexton's  
spade

Shall wound the tender sod. Encincture  
small,  
But infinite its grasp of weal and woe! 10  
Hopes, fears, in never-ending ebb and  
flow;—  
The spousal trembling, and the “dust to  
dust,”  
The prayers, the contrite struggle, and  
the trust  
That to the Almighty Father looks  
through all.

## XLII.

## CATHEDRALS, ETC.

OPEN your gates, ye everlasting Piles!  
Types of the spiritual Church which God  
hath reared;  
Not loth we quit the newly-hallowed  
sward  
And humble altar, 'mid your sumptuous  
aisles  
To kneel, or thrud your intricate defiles, 5  
Or down the nave to pace in motion slow;  
Watching, with upward eye, the tall  
tower grow  
And mount, at every step, with living  
wiles  
Instinct—to rouse the heart and lead the  
“will  
By a bright ladder to the world above. 10  
Open your gates, ye Monuments of love  
Divine! thou Lincoln, on thy sovereign  
hill!  
Thou, stately York! and Ye, whose  
splendours cheer  
Isis and Cam, to patient Science dear!

## XLIII.

INSIDE OF KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL,  
CAMBRIDGE<sup>1</sup>.

TAX not the royal Saint with vain ex-  
pense,  
With ill-matched aims the Architect who  
planned—  
Albeit labouring for a scanty band

<sup>1</sup> Wordsworth appears to have written one at least of these sonnets (XLIII-XLV.), and perhaps wrote all three, during a visit to his brother Christopher (Master of Trinity) at Cambridge, Nov.-Dec., 1820.—ED.

Of white-robed Scholars only—this im-  
mense  
And glorious Work of fine intelligence! 5  
Give all thou canst; high Heaven rejects  
the lore  
Of nicely-calculated less or more;  
So deemed the man who fashioned for the  
sense  
These lofty pillars, spread that branching  
roof  
Self-poised, and scooped into ten thou-  
sand cells, 10  
Where light and shade repose, where  
music dwells  
Lingering—and wandering on as loth to  
die;  
Like thoughts whose very sweetness yield-  
eth proof  
That they were born for immortality.

## XLIV.

## THE SAME.

WHAT awful perspective! while from our  
sight  
With gradual stealth the lateral windows  
hide  
Their Portraitures, their stone-work glim-  
mers, dyed  
In the soft chequerings of a sleepy light.  
Martyr, or King, or sainted Eremite, 5  
Whoe'er ye be, that thus, yourselves un-  
seen,  
Imbue your prison-bars with solemn sheen,  
Shine on, until ye fade with coming  
Night!—  
But, from the arms of silence—list! O list!  
The music bursteth into second life; 10  
The notes luxuriate, every stone is kissed  
By sound, or ghost of sound, in mazy  
strife;  
Heart-thrilling strains, that cast, before  
the eye  
Of the devout, a veil of ecstasy!

## XLV.

## CONTINUED.

THEY dreamt not of a perishable home  
Who thus could build. Be mine, in  
hours of fear  
Or grovelling thought, to seek a refuge  
here;

Or through the aisles of Westminster to  
 roam;  
 Where bubbles burst, and folly's dancing  
 foam 5  
 Melts, if it cross the threshold; where the  
 wreath  
 Of awe-struck wisdom droops: or let my  
 path  
 Lead to that younger Pile, whose sky-  
 like dome  
 Hath typified by reach of daring art  
 Infinity's embrace; whose guardian crest,  
 The silent Cross, among the stars shall  
 spread 11  
 As now, when She hath also seen her  
 breast  
 Filled with mementos, satiate with its part  
 Of grateful England's overflowing Dead.

## XLVI.

## EJACULATION.

GLORY to God! and to the Power who came  
 In filial duty, clothed with love divine,  
 That made His human tabernacle shine  
 Like Ocean burning with purpureal flame;  
 Or like the Alpine Mount, that takes its  
 name 5  
 From roseate hues, far kenne'd at morn  
 and even,  
 In hours of peace, or when the storm is  
 driven  
 Along the nether region's rugged frame!  
 Earth prompts—Heaven urges; let us  
 seek the light,

Studious of that pure intercourse begun to  
 When first our infant brows their lustre  
 won;  
 So, like the Mountain, may we grow  
 more bright  
 From unimpeded commerce with the Sun,  
 At the approach of all-involving night.

## XLVII.

## CONCLUSION.

WHY sleeps the future, as a snake en-  
 rolled,  
 Coil within coil, at noon-tide? For the  
 WORD  
 Yields, if with unpresumptuous faith  
 explored,  
 Power at whose touch the sluggard shall  
 unfold  
 His drowsy rings. Look forth!—that  
 Stream behold, 5  
 THAT STREAM upon whose bosom we  
 have passed  
 Floating at ease while nations have  
 effaced  
 Nations, and Death has gathered to his  
 fold  
 Long lines of mighty Kings—look forth,  
 my Soul! 9  
 (Nor in this vision be thou slow to trust)  
 The living Waters, less and less by guilt  
 Stained and polluted, brighten as they  
 roll,  
 Till they have reached the eternal City—  
 built  
 For the perfected Spirits of the just!

## EVENING VOLUNTARIES.

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### I.

[Composed 1832.—Published 1835.]

CALM is the fragrant air, and loth to lose  
Day's grateful warmth, tho' moist with  
falling dews.

Look for the stars, you'll say that there  
are none;

Look up a second time, and, one by one,  
You mark them twinkling out with silvery  
light,

And wonder how they could elude the  
sight!

The birds, of late so noisy in their bowers,  
Warbled a while with faint and fainter  
powers,

But now are silent as the dim-seen flowers:  
Nor does the village Church-clock's iron  
tone

The time's and season's influence disown;  
Nine beats distinctly to each other bound  
In drowsy sequence—how unlike the  
sound

That, in rough winter, oft inflicts a fear  
On fireside listeners, doubting what they  
hear!

The shepherd, bent on rising with the sun,  
Had closed his door before the day was  
done,

And now with thankful heart to bed doth  
creep,

And joins his little children in their sleep.  
The bat, lured forth where trees the lane  
o'er shade,

Flits and refits along the close arcade;  
The busy dor-hawk chases the white moth  
With burring note, which Industry and  
Sloth

Might both be pleased with, for it suits  
them both.

A stream is heard—I see it not, but  
know

By its soft music whence the waters flow:

Wheels and the tread of hoofs are heard  
no more;

One boat there was, but it will touch the  
shore

With the next dipping of its slackened  
oar;

Faint sound, that, for the gayest of the  
gay,

Might give to serious thought a moment's  
sway,

As a last token of man's toilsome day!

### II.

#### ON A HIGH PART OF THE COAST OF CUMBERLAND.

Easter Sunday, April 7.

#### THE AUTHOR'S SIXTY-THIRD BIRTH- DAY.

[Composed April 7, 1833.—Published 1835.]

THE Sun, that seemed so mildly to retire,  
Flung back from distant climes a stream-  
ing fire,

Whose blaze is now subdued to tender  
gleams,

Prelude of night's approach with soothing  
dreams.

Look round;—of all the clouds not one is  
moving;

'Tis the still hour of thinking, feeling,  
loving.

Silent, and steadfast as the vaulted sky,  
The boundless plain of waters seems to  
lie:—

Comes that low sound from breezes rust-  
ling o'er

The grass-crowned headland that conceals  
the shore?

No; 'tis the earth-voice of the mighty sea,  
Whispering how meek and gentle he  
can be!

Thou Power supreme! who, arming to  
rebuke  
Offenders, dost put off the gracious look,  
And clothe thyself with terrors like the  
flood 15  
Of Ocean roused into his fiercest mood,  
Whatever discipline thy Will ordain  
For the brief course that must for me  
remain;  
Teach me with quick-eared spirit to rejoice  
In admonitions of thy softest voice! 20  
Whate'er the path these mortal feet may  
trace,  
Breathe through my soul the blessing of  
thy grace,  
Glad, through a perfect love, a faith  
sincere  
Drawn from the wisdom that begins with  
fear,  
Glad to expand; and, for a season, free 25  
From finite cares, to rest absorbed in  
Thee!

## III.

(BY THE SEA-SIDE.)

[Composed 1833.—Published 1835.]

THE sun is couched, the sea-fowl gone to  
rest,  
And the wild storm hath somewhere found  
a nest;  
Air slumbers—wave with wave no longer  
strives,  
Only a heaving of the deep survives,  
A tell-tale motion! soon will it be laid, 5  
And by the tide alone the water swayed.  
Stealthy withdrawals, interminglings  
mild  
Of light with shade in beauty reconciled—  
Such is the prospect far as sight can  
range,  
The soothing recompense, the welcome  
change. 10  
Where now the ships that drove before  
the blast,  
Threatened by angry breakers as they  
passed;  
And by a train of flying clouds bemoaned;  
Or, in the hollow surge, at anchor rocked  
As on a bed of death? Some lodge in  
peace, 15

Saved by His care who bade the tempest  
cease;  
And some, too heedless of past danger,  
court  
Fresh gales to waft them to the far-off  
port;  
But near, or hanging sea and sky between,  
Not one of all those winged powers is  
seen, 20  
Seen in her course, nor 'mid this quiet  
heard;  
Yet oh! how gladly would the air be  
stirred  
By some acknowledgment of thanks and  
praise,  
Soft in its temper as those vesper lays  
Sung to the Virgin while accordant  
oars 25  
Urge the slow bark along Calabrian  
shores;  
A sea-born service through the mountains  
felt  
Till into one loved vision all things melt:  
Or like those hymns that soothe with  
graver sound  
The gulfy coast of Norway iron-bound; 30  
Ard, from the wide and open Baltic, rise  
With punctual care, Lutheran harmonies.  
Hush, not a voice is here! but why repine,  
Now when the star of eve comes forth to  
shine  
On British waters with that look be-  
nign? 35  
Ye mariners, that plough your onward  
way,  
Or in the haven rest, or sheltering bay,  
May silent thanks at least to God be given  
With a full heart; "our thoughts are heard  
in heaven!"

## IV.

[Composed 1834.—Published 1835.]

NOR in the lucid intervals of life  
That come but as a curse to party-strife;  
Not in some hour when Pleasure with a  
sigh  
Of languor puts his rosy garland by;  
Not in the breathing-times of that poor  
slave 5  
Who daily piles up wealth in Mammon's  
cave—

Is Nature felt, or can be; nor do words,  
Which practised talent readily affords,  
Prove that her hand has touched responsive chords;  
Nor has her gentle beauty power to  
move  
With genuine rapture and with fervent  
love  
The soul of Genius, if he dare to take  
Life's rule from passion craved for passion's  
sake;  
Untaught that meekness is the cherished  
bent  
Of all the truly great and all the  
innocent.

15

But who is innocent? By grace divine,  
Not otherwise, O Nature! we are thine,  
Through good and evil thine, in just degree  
Of rational and manly sympathy.  
To all that Earth from pensive hearts is  
stealing,  
And Heaven is now to gladdened eyes  
revealing,  
Add every charm the Universe can show  
Through every change its aspects under-  
go—  
Care may be respited, but not repealed;  
No perfect cure grows on that bounded  
field.  
Vain is the pleasure, a false calm the  
peace,  
If He, through whom alone our conflicts  
cease,  
Our virtuous hopes without relapse ad-  
vance,  
Come not to speed the Soul's deliverance;  
To the distempered Intellect refuse  
His gracious help, or give what we abuse.

25

## V.

(BY THE SIDE OF RYDAL MERE.)

[Composed 1834.—Published 1835.]

THE linnet's warble, sinking towards a  
close,  
Hints to the thrush 'tis time for their  
repose;  
The shrill-voiced thrush is heedless, and  
again  
The monitor revives his own sweet strain;

But both will soon be mastered, and the  
copse  
Be left as silent as the mountain-tops,  
Ere some commanding star dismiss to rest  
The throng of rooks, that now, from twig  
or nest,  
(After a steady flight on home-bound  
wings,  
And a last game of mazy hoverings  
Around their ancient grove) with cawing  
noise  
Disturb the liquid music's equipoise.

5

O Nightingale! Who ever heard thy  
song  
Might here be moved, till Fancy grows  
so strong  
That listening sense is pardonably cheated  
Where wood or stream by thee was never  
greeted.  
Surely, from fairest spots of favoured  
lands,  
Were not some gifts withheld by jealous  
hands,  
This hour of deepening darkness here  
would be  
As a fresh morning for new harmony; so  
And lays as prompt would hail the dawn  
of Night:  
A dawn she has both beautiful and bright,  
When the East kindles with the full  
moon's light;  
Not like the rising sun's impatient glow  
Dazzling the mountains, but an overflow  
Of solemn splendour, in mutation slow.

16

Wanderer by spring with gradual pro-  
gress led,  
Forsook profoundly felt as widely spread;  
To king, to peasant, to rough sailor, dear,  
And to the soldier's trumpet-wearied ear;  
How welcome wouldst thou be to this  
green Vale  
Fairer than Tempe! Yet, sweet Night-  
ingale!  
From the warm breeze that bears thee on,  
alight  
At will, and stay thy migratory flight;  
Build, at thy choice, or sing, by pool or  
fount,  
Who shall complain, or call thee to  
account?

35

The wisest, happiest, of our kind are they  
That ever walk content with Nature's  
way,

God's goodness—measuring bounty as it  
may;

For whom the gravest thought of what  
they miss,

Chastening the fulness of a present bliss,  
Is with that wholesome office satisfied,  
While unrepining sadness is allied  
In thankful bosoms to a modest pride.

## VI.

[Composed 1834.—Published 1835.]

SOFT as a cloud is yon blue Ridge—the  
Mere

Seems firm as solid crystal, breathless,  
clear,

And motionless; and, to the gazer's eye,  
Deeper than ocean, in the immensity  
Of its vague mountains and unreal sky! 5  
But, from the process in that still retreat,  
Turn to minuter changes at our feet;

Observe how dewy Twilight has with-  
drawn

The crowd of daisies from the shaven lawn,  
And has restored to view its tender  
green,

That, while the sun rode high, was lost  
beneath their dazzling sheen.

—An emblem this of what the sober Hour  
Can do for minds disposed to feel its  
power!

Thus oft, when we in vain have wished  
away

The petty pleasures of the garish day, 15  
Meek eve shuts up the whole usurping  
host

(Unbashful dwarfs each glittering at his  
post)

And leaves the disencumbered spirit free  
To reassume a staid simplicity.

'Tis well—but what are helps of time  
and place,

When wisdom stands in need of nature's  
grace;

Why do good thoughts, invoked or not,  
descend,

Like angels from their bowers, our virtues  
to befriend;

If yet To-morrow, unbelied, may say,  
"I come to open out, for fresh display,  
The elastic vanities of yesterday?" 26

## VII.

[Composed 1834.—Published 1835.]

THE leaves that rustled on this oak-  
crowned hill,

And sky that danced among those leaves,  
are still;

Rest smooths the way for sleep; in field  
and bower

Soft shades and dews have shed their  
blended power

On drooping eyelid and the closing  
flower;

Sound is there none at which the faintest  
heart

Might leap, the weakest nerve of super-  
stition start;

Save when the Owl's unexpected scream  
Pierces the ethereal vault; and 'mid the  
gleam

Of unsubstantial imagery, the dream, 10  
From the hushed vale's realities, trans-  
ferred

To the still lake) the imaginative Bird  
Seems, 'mid inverted mountains, not un-  
heard.

Grave Creature!—whether, while the  
moon shines bright

On thy wings opened wide for smoothest  
flight,

Thou art discovered in a roofless tower, 15  
Rising from what may once have been a  
lady's bower;

Or spied where thou sitt'st moping in  
thy mew

At the dim centre of a churchyard faw ;  
Or from a rifted crag or ivy nod 20

Deep in a forest, thy secure abode,  
Thou giv'st, for pastime's sake, by shriek  
or shout,

A puzzling notice of thy whereabouts—  
May the night never come, nor day be  
seen,

When I shall scorn thy voice or mock thy  
mien !

In classic ages men perceived a soul  
Of sapience in thy aspect, headless Owl ! 25

Thee Athens revered in the studious  
grove;  
And near the golden sceptre grasped by  
Jove,  
His Eagle's favourite perch, while round  
him sate 30  
The Gods revolving the decrees of Fate,  
Thou, too, wert present at Minerva's side:—  
Hark to that second larum!—far and  
wide  
The elements have heard, and rock and  
cave replied.

### VIII.

[Composed June 8, 1802.—Published 1807; omitted from edd. 1815-1832; republished 1835.]

This *Impromptu* appeared, many years ago, among the Author's poems, from which, in subsequent editions, it was excluded. It is reprinted at the request of the Friend in whose presence the lines were thrown off.

THE sun has long been set,  
The stars are out by twos and threes,  
The little birds are piping yet  
Among the bushes and trees;  
There's a cuckoo, and one or two thrushes,  
And a far-off wind that rushes, 6  
And a sound of water that gushes,  
And the cuckoo's sovereign cry  
Fills all the hollow of the sky.  
Who would go "parading" 10  
In London, "and masquerading,"  
On such a night of June  
With that beautiful soft half-moon,  
And all these innocent blisses?  
On such a night as this is! 15

### IX.

COMPOSED UPON AN EVENING OF  
EXTRAORDINARY SPLENDOUR  
AND BEAUTY.

[Composed 1818.—Published 1820.]

#### I.

HAD this effulgence disappeared  
With flying haste, I might have sent,  
Among the speechless clouds, a look  
Of blank astonishment;  
But 'tis endowed with power to stay, 5  
And sanctify one closing day,

That frail Mortality may see—  
What is?—ah no, but what *can* be!  
Time was when field and watery cove  
With modulated echoes rang, 10  
While choirs of fervent Angels sang  
Their vespers in the grove;  
Or, crowning, star-like, each some sove-  
reign height,  
Warbled, for heaven above and earth  
below,  
Strains suitable to both.—Such holy rite,  
Methinks, if audibly repeated now 16  
From hill or valley, could not move  
Sublimar transport, purer love,  
Than doth this silent spectacle—the  
gleam—  
The shadow—and the peace supreme! 20

#### II.

No sound is uttered,—but a deep  
And solemn harmony pervades  
The hollow vale from steep to steep,  
And penetrates the glades.  
Far-distant images draw nigh, 25  
Called forth by wondrous potency  
Of beamy radiance, that imbues  
Whate'er it strikes with gem-like hues!  
In vision exquisitely clear,  
Herds range along the mountain side; 30  
And glistening antlers are descried;  
And gilded flocks appear.  
Thine is the tranquil hour, purpureal  
Eve!  
But long as god-like wish, or hope di-  
vine,  
Informs my spirit, ne'er can I believe 35  
That this magnificence is wholly thine!  
—From worlds not quickened by the sun  
A portion of the gift is won;  
An intermingling of Heaven's pomp is  
spread  
On ground which British shepherds  
tread! 40

#### III.

And if there be whom broken ties  
Afflict, or injuries assail,  
Yon hazy ridges to their eyes  
Present a glorious scale,  
Climbing suffused with sunny air, 45  
To stop—no record hath told where!

And tempting Fancy to ascend,  
 And with immortal Spirits blend !  
 —Wings at my shoulders seem to play ;  
 But, rooted here, I stand and gaze 50  
 On those bright steps that heavenward  
     raise  
 Their practicable way.  
 Come forth, ye drooping old men, look  
     abroad,  
 And see to what fair countries ye are  
     bound !  
 And if some traveller, weary of his road,  
 Hath slept since noon-tide on the grassy  
     ground, 56  
 Ye Genii ! to his covert speed ;  
 And wake him with such gentle heed  
 As may attune his soul to meet the  
     dower  
 Bestowed on this transcendent hour ! 60

## IV.

Such hues from their celestial Urn  
 Were wont to stream before mine eye,  
 Where'er it wandered in the morn  
 Of blissful infancy.  
 This glimpse of glory, why renewed ? 65  
 Nay, rather speak with gratitude ;  
 For, if a vestige of those gleams  
 Survived, 'twas only in my dreams.  
 Dread Power ! whom peace and calmness  
     serve  
 No less than Nature's threatening voice,  
 If aught unworthy be my choice, 71  
 From THEE if I would swerve ;  
 Oh, let Thy grace remind me of the light  
 Full early lost, and fruitlessly deplored ;  
 Which, at this moment, on my waking  
     sight 75  
 Appears to shine, by miracle restored ;  
 My soul, though yet confined to earth,  
 Rejoices in a second birth !  
 —'Tis past, the visionary splendour fades ;  
 And night approaches with her shades. 80

*Note*—The multiplication of mountain-ridges, described at the commencement of the third Stanza of this Ode as a kind of Jacob's Ladder, leading to Heaven, is produced either by watery vapours, or sunny haze ;—in the present instance by the latter cause. Allusions to the Ode entitled "Intimations of Immortality" pervade the last Stanza of the foregoing Poem.

## X.

## COMPOSED BY THE SEA-SHORE.

[Composed 1838.—Published 1845.]

WHAT mischief cleaves to unsubdued re-  
     gret,  
 How fancy sickens by vague hopes beset ;  
 How baffled projects on the spirit prey,  
 And fruitless wishes eat the heart away,  
 The Sailor knows ; he best, whose lot is  
     cast 5  
 On the relentless sea that holds him fast  
 On chance dependent, and the fickle star  
 Of power, through long and melancholy  
     war.  
 O sad it is, in sight of foreign shores,  
 Daily to think on old familiar doors, 10  
 Hearths loved in childhood, and ancestral  
     floors ;  
 Or, tossed about along a waste of foam,  
 To ruminate on that delightful home  
 Which with the dear Betrothed *was* to  
     come ;  
 Or came and was and is, yet meets the eye  
 Never but in the world of memory ; 16  
 Or in a dream recalled, whose smoothest  
     range  
 Is crossed by knowledge, or by dread, of  
     change,  
 And if not so, whose perfect joy makes  
     sleep  
 A thing too bright for breathing man to  
     keep. 20  
 Hail to the virtues which that perilous life  
 Extracts from Nature's elemental strife ;  
 And welcome glory won in battles fought  
 As bravely as the foe was keenly sought.  
 But to each gallant Captain and his crew  
 A less imperious sympathy is due, 26  
 Such as my verse now yields, while moon-  
     beams play  
 On the mute sea in this unruffled bay ;  
 Such as will promptly flow from every  
     breast,  
 Where good men, disappointed in the  
     quest 30  
 Of wealth and power and honours, long  
     for rest ;  
 Or, having known the splendours of  
     success,  
 Sigh for the obscurities of happiness.

## XI.

[Composed ?.—Published : vol. of 1842.]

THE Crescent-moon, the Star of Love,  
 Glories of evening, as ye there are seen  
 With but a span of sky between—  
 Speak one of you, my doubts remove,  
 Which is the attendant Page and which  
 the Queen?

5

## XII.

## TO THE MOON.

COMPOSED BY THE SEASIDE,—ON THE  
 COAST OF CUMBERLAND.

[Composed 1835.—Published 1837.]

WANDERER! that stoop'st so low, and  
 com'st so near  
 To human life's unsettled atmosphere;  
 Who lov'st with Night and Silence to  
 partake,  
 So might it seem, the cares of them that  
 wake;  
 And, through the cottage-lattice softly  
 peeping,  
 Dost shield from harm the humblest of  
 the sleeping;  
 What pleasure once encompassed those  
 sweet names  
 Which yet in thy behalf the Poet claims,  
 An idolizing dreamer as of yore!—  
 I slight them all; and, on this sea-beat  
 shore  
 Sole-sitting, only can to thoughts attend  
 That bid me hail thee as the SAILOR'S  
 FRIEND;  
 So call thee for heaven's grace through  
 thee made known  
 By confidence supplied and mercy shown,  
 When not a twinkling star or beacon's  
 light  
 Abates the perils of a stormy night;  
 And for less obvious benefits, that find  
 Their way, with thy pure help, to heart  
 and mind;  
 Both for the adventurer starting in life's  
 prime;  
 And veteran ranging round from clime to  
 clime,

20

Long-baffled hope's slow fever in his  
 veins,  
 And wounds and weakness oft his labour's  
 sole remains.

The aspiring Mountains and the wind-  
 ing Streams,  
 Empress of Night! are gladdened by thy  
 beams;  
 A look of thine the wilderness pervades, 25  
 And penetrates the forest's inmost shades;  
 Thou, chequering peaceably the minster's  
 gloom,  
 Guid'st the pale Mourner to the lost one's  
 tomb;  
 Canst reach the Prisoner—to his grated  
 cell  
 Welcome, though silent and intangible!—  
 And lives there one, of all that come and  
 go 31  
 On the great waters toiling to and fro,  
 One, who has watched thee at some quiet  
 hour  
 Enthroned aloft in undisputed power,  
 Or crossed by vapoury streaks and clouds  
 that move 35  
 Catching the lustre they in part reprove—  
 Nor sometimes felt a fitness in thy sway  
 To call up thoughts that shun the glare  
 of day,  
 And make the serious happier than the  
 gay?

Yes, lovely Moon! if thou so mildly  
 bright 40  
 Dost rouse, yet surely in thy own despite,  
 To fiercer mood the frenzy-stricken  
 brain,  
 Let me a compensating faith maintain;  
 That there's a sensitive, a tender, part  
 Which thou canst touch in every human  
 heart, 45  
 For healing and composure.—But as least  
 And mightiest billows ever have confessed  
 Thy domination; as the whole vast Sea  
 Feels through her lowest depths thy sove-  
 reignty;  
 So shines that countenance with especial  
 grace 50  
 On them who urge the keel her plains to  
 trace

Furrowing its way right onward. The  
most rude,  
Cut off from home and country, may have  
stood—  
Even till long gazing hath bedimmed his  
eye,  
Or the mute rapture ended in a sigh— 55  
Touched by accordance of thy placid  
cheer,  
With some internal lights to memory dear,  
Or fancies stealing forth to soothe the  
breast  
Tired with its daily share of earth's un-  
rest,—  
Gentle awakenings, visitations meek; 60  
A kindly influence whereof few will speak,  
Though it can wet with tears the hardest  
cheek.

And when thy beauty in the shadowy  
cave  
Is hidden, buried in its monthly grave;  
Then, while the Sailor, 'mid an open sea  
Swept by a favouring wind that leaves  
thought free, 66  
Paces the deck—no star perhaps in sight,  
And nothing save the moving ship's own  
light  
To cheer the long dark hours of vacant  
night—  
Oft with his musings does thy image blend,  
In his mind's eye thy crescent horns ascend,  
And thou art still, O Moon, that SAILOR'S  
FRIEND!

### XIII. TO THE MOON. (RYDAL.)

[Composed 1835.—Published 1837.]

QUEEN of the stars!—so gentle, so benign,  
That ancient Fable did to thee assign,  
When darkness creeping o'er thy silver  
brow  
Warned thee these upper regions to  
forego,  
Alternate empire in the shades below— 5  
A Bard, who, lately near the wide-spread  
sea  
Traversed by gleaming ships, looked up  
to thee

With grateful thoughts, doth now thy  
rising hail  
From the close confines of a shadowy vale.  
Glory of night, conspicuous yet serene, 10  
Nor less attractive when by glimpses  
seen  
Through cloudy umbrage, well might that  
fair face,  
And all those attributes of modest grace,  
In days when Fancy wrought unchecked  
by fear,  
Down to the green earth fetch thee from  
thy sphere, 15  
To sit in leafy woods by fountains clear!

O still beloved (for thine, meek Power,  
are charms  
That fascinate the very Babe in arms,  
While he, uplifted towards thee, laughs  
outright,  
Spreading his little palms in his glad  
Mother's sight) 20  
O still beloved, once worshipped! Time,  
that frowns  
In his destructive flight on earthly crowns,  
Spares thy mild splendour; still those  
far-shot beams  
Tremble on dancing waves and rippling  
streams  
With stainless touch, as chaste as when  
thy praise 25  
Was sung by Virgin-choirs in festal lays;  
And through dark trials still dost thou  
explore  
Thy way for increase punctual as of yore,  
When teeming Matrons—yielding to rude  
faith  
In mysteries of birth and life and death 30  
And painful struggle and deliverance—  
prayed  
Of thee to visit them with lenient aid.  
What though the rites be swept away, the  
fanes  
Extinct that echoed to the votive strains;  
Yet thy mild aspect does not, cannot,  
cease  
Love to promote and purity and peace;  
And Fancy, unreprieved, even yet may  
trace 37  
Faint types of suffering in thy beamless  
face.

Then, silent Monitress! let us—not  
blind  
To worlds unthought of till the searching  
mind 40  
Of Science laid them open to mankind—  
Told, also, how the voiceless heavens de-  
clare  
God's glory; and acknowledging thy  
share  
In that blest charge; let us—without  
offence  
To aught of highest, holiest, influence—  
Receive whatever good 'tis given thee to  
dispense. 46  
May sage and simple, catching with one  
eye  
The moral intimations of the sky,  
Learn from thy course, where'er their  
own be taken,  
"To look on tempests, and be never  
shaken;" 50  
To keep with faithful step the appointed  
way  
Eclipsing or eclipsed, by night or day,  
And from example of thy monthly range  
Gently to brook decline and fatal change;  
Meek, patient, steadfast, and with loftier  
scope, 55  
Than thy revival yields, for gladsome  
hope!

XIV.

TO LUCCA GIORDANO.

[Composed 1846.—Published 1850.]

GIORDANO, verily thy Pencil's skill  
Hath here portrayed with Nature's hap-  
piest grace  
The fair Endymion couched on Latmos-  
hill;  
And Dian gazing on the Shepherd's  
face  
In rapture,—yet suspending her embrace,  
As not unconscious with what power the  
thrill 6  
Of her most timid touch his sleep would  
chase,  
And, with his sleep, that beauty calm and  
still.

Oh may this work have found its last re-  
treat  
Here in a Mountain-bard's secure abode,  
One to whom, yet a School-boy, Cynthia  
showed 11  
A face of love which he in love would  
greet,  
Fixed, by her smile, upon some rocky  
seat;  
Or lured along where green-wood paths  
he trod.

RYDAL MOUNT, 1846.

XV.

[Composed 1846.—Published 1850.]

Who but is pleased to watch the moon on  
high  
Travelling where she from time to time  
enshrouds  
Her head, and nothing loth her Majesty  
Renounces, till among the scattered clouds  
One with its kindling edge declares that  
soon 5  
Will reappear before the uplifted eye  
A Form as bright, as beautiful a moon,  
To glide in open prospect through clear  
sky.  
Pity that such a promise e'er should  
prove  
False in the issue, that yon seeming space  
Of sky should be in truth the steadfast  
face 11  
Of a cloud flat and dense, through which  
must move  
(By transit not unlike man's frequent  
doom)  
The Wanderer lost in more determined  
gloom.

XVI.

[Composed 1846.—Published 1850.]

WHERE lies the truth? has Man, in wis-  
dom's creed,  
A pitiable doom; for respite brief  
A care more anxious, or a heavier grief?  
Is he ungrateful, and doth little heed

|  |   |
|--|---|
| God's bounty, soon forgotten; or indeed, | Warbled in hearing both of earth and        |
| Must Man, with labour born, awake to     | sky;  |
| sorrow                                   | 6 But o'er the contrast wherefore heave     |
| When Flowers rejoice and Larks with      | a sigh?                                     |
| rival speed                              | Like those aspirants let us soar—our aim,   |
| Spring from their nests to bid the Sun   | Through life's worst trials, whether shocks |
| good morrow?                             | or snares,                                  |
| They mount for rapture as their songs    | A happier, brighter, purer Heaven than      |
| proclaim                                 | theirs.                                     |

# POEMS

COMPOSED OR SUGGESTED DURING A TOUR, IN THE SUMMER OF 1833<sup>1</sup>.

Having been prevented by the lateness of the season, in 1831, from visiting Staffa and Iona, the author made these the principal objects of a short tour in the summer of 1833, of which the following Series of Poems is a Memorial. The course pursued was down the Cumberland river Derwent, and to Whitehaven; thence (by the Isle of Man, where a few days were passed) up the Frith of Clyde to Greenock, then to Oban, Staffa, Iona; and back towards England, by Loch Awe, Inverary, Loch Goll-head, Greenock, and through parts of Renfrewshire, Ayrshire, and Dumfries-shire, to Carlisle, and thence up the river Eden, and homewards by Ullswater.

## I.

ADIEU, Rydalian Laurels! that have  
grown

And spread as if ye knew that days  
might come

When ye would shelter in a happy home,  
On this fair Mount, a Poet of your own,  
One who ne'er ventured for a Delphic  
crown

To sue the God; but, haunting your green  
shade

All seasons through, is humbly pleased to  
braid

Ground-flowers, beneath your guardian-  
ship, self-sown.

Farewell! no Minstrels now with harp  
new-strung

For summer wandering quit their house-  
hold bowers;

Yet not for this wants Poesy a tongue  
To cheer the Itinerant on whom she  
pours

Her spirit, while he crosses lonely moors,  
Or musing sits forsaken halls among.

## II.

WHY should the Enthusiast, journeying  
through this Isle,

Repine as if his hour were come too late?  
Not unprotected in her mouldering state,

Antiquity salutes him with a smile,  
Mid fruitful fields that ring with jocund  
toil,

And pleasure-grounds where Taste, re-  
fined Co-mate

Of Truth and Beauty, strives to imitate,  
Far as she may, primeval Nature's style.

Fair Land! by Time's parental love made  
free,

By Social Order's watchful arms em-  
braced;

With unexampled union meet in thee,  
For eye and mind, the present and the  
past;

With golden prospect for futurity,  
If that be revered which ought to  
last.

## III.

THEY called Thee MERRY ENGLAND, in  
old time;

A happy people won for thee that name  
With envy heard in many a distant  
clime;

And, spite of change, for me thou keep'st  
the same

Endearing title, a responsive chime  
To the heart's fond belief; though some  
there are

Whose sterner judgments deem that word  
a snare

For inattentive Fancy, like the lime  
Which foolish birds are caught with.

Can, I ask,  
This face of rural beauty be a mask

For discontent, and poverty, and crime;

<sup>1</sup> The Poems of this Series were for the most part composed in 1833, and published for the first time in the volume of 1835 entitled *Farrow Revisited, and Other Poems*. Chronological notes are attached only to those pieces to which this observation does not apply. See Nos. xxvii, xliii, and xlvii.—ED.

These spreading towns a cloak for lawless  
will?  
Forbid it, Heaven!—and MERRY ENG-  
LAND still  
Shall be thy rightful name, in prose and  
rhyme!

## IV.

TO THE RIVER GRETA, NEAR KESWICK.

GRETA, what fearful listening! when huge  
stones  
Rumble along thy bed, block after block:  
Or, whirling with reiterated shock,  
Combat, while darkness aggravates the  
groans:  
But if thou (like Cocytus from the moans  
Heard on his rueful margin) thence wert  
named 6  
The Mourner, thy true nature was de-  
famed,  
And the habitual murmur that atones  
For thy worst rage, forgotten. Oft as  
Spring  
Decks, on thy sinuous banks, her thou-  
sand thrones, 10  
Seats of glad instinct and love's carol-  
ling,  
The concert, for the happy, then may vie  
With liveliest peals of birth-day har-  
mony:  
To a grieved heart the notes are benisons.

## V.

TO THE RIVER DERWENT.

AMONG the mountains were we nursed,  
loved Stream!  
Thou near the eagle's nest—within brief  
sail,  
I, of his bold wing floating on the gale,  
Where thy deep voice could lull me!  
Faint the beam  
Of human life when first allowed to  
gleam 5  
On mortal notice.—Glory of the vale,  
Such thy meek outset, with a crown,  
though frail,  
Kept in perpetual verdure by the steam  
Of thy soft breath!—Less vivid wreath  
entwined

Nemean victor's brow; less bright was  
worn, 10  
Mead of some Roman chief—in triumph  
borne  
With captives chained; and shedding  
from his car  
The sunset splendours of a finished war  
Upon the proud enslavers of mankind!

## VI.

IN SIGHT OF THE TOWN OF COCKER-  
MOUTH.

(Where the Author was born, and his Father's  
remains are laid.)

A POINT of life between my Parent's dust,  
And yours, my buried Little-ones! am I;  
And to those graves looking habitually  
In kindred quiet I repose my trust.  
Death to the innocent is more than just, 5  
And, to the sinner, mercifully bent;  
So may I hope, if truly I repent  
And meekly bear the ills which bear I  
must:  
And You, my Offspring! that do still  
remain,  
Yet may outstrip me in the appointed  
race, 10  
If e'er, through fault of mine, in mutual  
pain  
We breathed together for a moment's  
space,  
The wrong, by love provoked, let love  
arraign,  
And only love keep in your hearts a  
place.

## VII.

ADDRESS FROM THE SPIRIT OF COCKER-  
MOUTH CASTLE.\*

"THOU look'st upon me, and dost fondly  
think,  
Poet! that, stricken as both are by years,  
We, differing once so much, are now  
Compeers,  
Prepared, when each has stood his time,  
to sink  
Into the dust. Erewhile a sterner link 5  
United us; when thou, in boyish play,  
Entering my dungeon, didst become a prey

To soul-appalling darkness. Not a blink  
Of light was there;—and thus did I, thy  
Tutor,  
Make thy young thoughts acquainted  
with the grave; 10  
While thou wert chasing the winged  
butterfly  
Through my green courts; or climbing, a  
bold suitor,  
Up to the flowers whose golden progeny  
Still round my shattered brow in beauty  
wave."

VIII.

NUN'S WELL, BRIGHAM.

THE cattle crowding round this beverage  
clear  
To slake their thirst, with reckless hoofs  
have trod  
The encircling turf into a barren clod;  
Through which the waters creep, then  
disappear,  
Born to be lost in Derwent flowing near;  
Yet o'er the brink, and round the lime-  
stone cell 6  
Of the pure spring (they call it the "Nun's  
Well,"  
Name that first struck by chance my  
startled ear)  
A tender Spirit broods—the pensive  
Shade 9  
Of ritual honours to this Fountain paid  
By hooded Votaresses with saintly cheer;  
Albeit oft the Virgin-mother mild  
Looked down with pity upon eyes be-  
guiled  
Into the shedding of "too soft a tear."

IX.

TO A FRIEND.

On the banks of the Derwent.

PASTOR and Patriot!—at whose bidding  
rise  
These modest walls, amid a flock that need,  
For one who comes to watch them and  
to feed,  
A fixed Abode—keep down presageful  
sighs.  
Threats, which the unthinking only can  
despise, 5

Perplex the Church; but be thou firm,—  
be true  
To thy first hope, and this good work  
pursue,  
Poor as thou art. A welcome sacrifice  
Dost Thou prepare, whose sign will be  
the smoke  
Of thy new hearth; and sooner shall its  
wreaths, 10  
Mounting while earth her morning in-  
cense breathes,  
From wandering fiends of air receive a yoke,  
And straightway cease to aspire, than  
God disdain  
This humble tribute as ill-timed or vain.

X.

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

Landing at the mouth of the Derwent, Work-  
ington.  
DEAR to the Loves, and to the Graces  
vowed,  
The Queen drew back the wimple that  
she wore;  
And to the throng, that on the Cumbrian  
shore  
Her landing hailed, how touchingly she  
bowed!  
And like a Star (that, from a heavy cloud  
Of pine-tree foliage poised in air, forth  
darts, 6  
When a soft summer gale at evening parts  
The gloom that did its loveliness enshroud)  
She smiled; but Time, the old Saturnian  
seer,  
Sighed on the wing as her foot pressed  
the strand, 10  
With step prelude to a long array  
Of woes and degradations hand in hand—  
Weeping captivity, and shuddering fear  
Stilled by the ensanguined block of  
Fotheringay!

XI.

STANZAS

SUGGESTED IN A STEAMBOAT OFF SAINT  
BEES' HEADS, ON THE COAST OF CUM-  
BERLAND.  
If Life were slumber on a bed of down,  
Toil unimposed, vicissitude unknown,

- Sad were our lot: no hunter of the hare  
Exults like him whose javelin from the lair  
Has roused the lion; no one plucks the  
rose, 5  
Whose proffered beauty in safe shelter  
blows  
Mid a trim garden's summer luxuries,  
With joy like his who climbs, on hands  
and knees,  
For some rare plant, yon Headland of  
St. Bees.
- This independence upon oar and sail, 10  
This new indifference to breeze or gale,  
This straight-lined progress, furrowing  
a flat lea,  
And regular as if locked in certainty—  
Depress the hours. Up, Spirit of the  
storm!  
That Courage may find something to  
perform; 15  
That Fortitude, whose blood disdains to  
freeze  
At Danger's bidding, may confront the  
seas,  
Firm as the towering Headlands of  
St. Bees.
- Dread cliff of Baruth! *that* wild wish  
may sleep,  
Bold as if men and creatures of the Deep  
Breathed the same element; too many  
wrecks 21  
Have struck thy sides, too many ghastly  
decks  
Hast thou looked down upon, that such  
a thought  
Should here be welcome, and in verse  
enwrought:  
With thy stern aspect better far agrees 25  
Utterance of thanks that we have past  
with ease,  
As millions thus shall do, the Headlands  
of St. Bees.
- Yet, while each useful Art augments her  
store,  
What boots the gain if Nature should  
lose more?  
And Wisdom, as she holds a Christian  
place 30  
In man's intelligence sublimed by grace?
- When Bega sought of yore the Cumbrian  
coast,  
Tempestuous winds her holy errand  
crossed:  
She knelt in prayer—the waves their  
wrath appease;  
And, from her vow well weighed in Hea-  
ven's decrees, 35  
Rose, where she touched the strand, the  
Chantry of St. Bees.
- "Cruel of heart were they, bloody o'  
hand,"  
Who in these Wilds then struggled for  
command;  
The strong were merciless, without hope  
the weak;  
Till this bright Stranger came, fair as  
day-break, 40  
And as a cresset true that darts its length  
Of beamy lustre from a tower of strength:  
Guiding the mariner through troubled seas,  
And cheering oft his peaceful reveries,  
Like the fixed Light that crowns yon  
Headland of St. Bees. 45
- To aid the Votress, miracles believed  
Wrought in men's minds, like miracles  
achieved;  
So piety took root; and Song might tell  
What humanizing virtues near her cell  
Sprang up, and spread their fragrance  
wide around; 50  
How savage bosoms melted at the sound  
Of gospel-truth enchained in harmonies  
Wafted o'er waves, or creeping through  
close trees,  
From her religious Mansion of St. Bees.
- When her sweet Voice, that instrument  
of love, 55  
Was glorified, and took its place, above  
The silent stars, among the angelic quire,  
Her chantry blazed with sacrilegious fire,  
And perished utterly; but her good deeds  
Had sown the spot, that witnessed them,  
with seeds 60  
Which lay in earth expectant, till a breeze  
With quickening impulse answered their  
mute pleas,  
And lo! a *statelier* pile, the Abbey of  
St. Bees.

There are the naked clothed, the hungry  
fed;  
And Charity extendeth to the dead 65  
Her intercessions made for the soul's rest  
Of tardy penitents; or for the best.  
Among the good (when love might else  
have slept,  
Sickened, or died) in pious memory kept:  
Thanks to the austere and simple De-  
votees, 70  
Who, to that service bound by venial  
fees,  
Keep watch before the altars of St. Bees.  
Are not, in sooth, their Requiem's sacred  
ties  
Woven out of passion's sharpest agonies,  
Subdued, composed, and formalized by  
art, 75  
To fix a wiser sorrow in the heart?  
The prayer for them whose hour is past  
away  
Says to the Living, profit while ye may!  
A little part, and that the worst, he sees  
Who thinks that priestly cunning holds  
the keys 80  
That best unlock the secrets of St. Bees.  
Conscience, the timid being's inmost light,  
Hope of the dawn and solace of the night,  
Cheers these Recluses with a steady ray  
In many an hour when judgment goes  
astray. 85  
Ah! scorn not hastily their rule who try  
Earth to despise, and flesh to mortify;  
Consume with zeal, in winged ecstasies  
Of prayer and praise forget their rosaries,  
Nor hear the loudest surges of St. Bees. 90  
Yet none so prompt to succour and pro-  
tect  
The forlorn traveller, or sailor wrecked  
On the bare coast; nor do they grudge  
the boon  
Which staff and cockle hat and sandal  
shoon  
Claim for the pilgrim: and, though chid-  
ings sharp 95  
May sometimes greet the strolling min-  
strel's harp,  
It is not then when, swept with sportive  
ease,

It charms a feast-day throng of all de-  
grees,  
Brightening the archway of revered St.  
Bees.  
How did the cliffs and echoing hills re-  
joice 100  
What time the Benedictine Brethren's  
voice,  
Imploring, or commanding with meet  
pride,  
Summoned the Chiefs to lay their feuds  
aside,  
And under one blest ensign serve the  
Lord  
In Palestine. Advance, indignant Sword!  
Flaming till thou from Paynim hands  
release 106  
That Tomb, dread centre of all sanctities  
Nursed in the quiet Abbey of St. Bees.  
But look we now to them whose minds  
from far  
Follow the fortunes which they may not  
share. 110  
While in Judea Fancy loves to roam,  
She helps to make a Holy-land at home:  
The Star of Bethlehem from its sphere  
invites  
To sound the crystal depth of maiden  
rights;  
And wedded Life, through scriptural  
mysteries, 115  
Heavenward ascends with all her charities,  
Taught by the hooded Celibates of St.  
Bees.  
Nor be it e'er forgotten how by skill  
Of cloistered Architects, free their souls  
to fill  
With love of God, throughout the Land  
were raised 120  
Churches, on whose symbolic beauty  
gazed  
Peasant and mail-clad Chief with pious  
awe;  
As at this day men seeing what they  
saw,  
Or the bare wreck of faith's solemnities,  
Aspire to more than earthly destinies; 125  
Witness yon Pile that greets us from  
St. Bees.

Yet more; around those Churches,  
gathered Towns  
Safe from the feudal Castle's haughty  
frowns;  
Peaceful abodes, where Justice might  
uphold  
Her scales with even hand, and culture  
mould 130  
The heart to pity, train the mind in care  
For rules of life, sound as the Time could  
bear.

Nor dost thou fail, thro' abject love of ease,  
Or hindrance raised by sordid purposes,  
To bear thy part in this good work,  
St. Bees. 135

Who with the ploughshare clove the  
barren moors,  
And to green meadows changed the  
swampy shores?  
Thinned the rank woods; and for the  
cheerful grange

Made room where wolf and boar were  
used to range?

Who taught, and showed by deeds, that  
gentler chains 140

Should bind the vassal to his lord's  
domains?

The thoughtful Monks, intent their God  
to please,

For Christ's dear sake, by human  
sympathies

Poured from the bosom of thy Church,  
St. Bees!

But all availed not; by a mandate given  
Through lawless will the Brotherhood  
was driven 146

Forth from their cells; their ancient  
House laid low

In Reformation's sweeping overthrow.

But now once more the local Heart  
revives,

The inextinguishable Spirit strives. 150

Oh may that Power who hushed the  
stormy seas,

And cleared a way for the first Votaries,  
Prosper the new-born College of St. Bees!

Alas! the Genius of our age, from Schools  
Less humble, draws her lessons, aims, and  
rules. 155

To Prowess guided by her insight keen  
Matter and Spirit are as one Machine;  
Boastful Idolatress of formal skill  
She in her own would merge the eternal  
will:  
Better, if Reason's triumphs match with  
these, 160  
Her flight before the bold credulities  
That furthered the first teaching of St.  
Bees<sup>1</sup>.

## XII.

IN THE CHANNEL, BETWEEN THE COAST  
OF CUMBERLAND AND THE ISLE OF  
MAN.

RANGING the heights of Scawfell or Black-  
comb,

In his lone course the Shepherd oft will  
pause,

And strive to fathom the mysterious laws  
By which the clouds, arrayed in light or  
gloom,

On Mona settle, and the shapes assume 5  
Of all her peaks and ridges. What he  
draws

From sense, faith, reason, fancy, of the  
cause,

He will take with him to the silent tomb.

Or by his fire, a child upon his knee,

Haply the untaught Philosopher may  
speak 10

Of the strange sight, nor hide his theory  
That satisfies the simple and the meek,  
Blest in their pious ignorance, though weak  
To cope with Sages undevoutly free.

## XIII.

AT SEA OFF THE ISLE OF MAN.

BOLD words affirmed, in days when faith  
was strong

And doubts and scruples seldom teased  
the brain,

That no adventurer's bark had power to  
gain

These shores if he approached them bent  
on wrong;

<sup>1</sup> See "Excursion," seventh part; and "Ecclesiastical Sketches," second part, near the beginning.

For, suddenly up-conjured from the  
Main,  
Mists rose to hide the Land—that search,  
though long  
And eager, might be still pursued in vain.  
O Fancy, what an age was *that* for song!  
That age, when not by *laws* inanimate,  
As men believed, the waters were im-  
pelled,  
The air controlled, the stars their courses  
held;  
But element and orb on *acts* did wait  
Of *Powers* endowed with visible form, in-  
stinct  
With will, and to their work by passion  
linked.

XIV.

DESIRE we past illusions to recall?  
To reinstate wild Fancy, would we hide  
Truths whose thick veil Science has  
drawn aside?  
No,—let this Age, high as she may, instal  
In her esteem the thirst that wrought  
man's fall,  
The universe is infinitely wide;  
And conquering Reason, if self-glorified,  
Can nowhere move uncrossed by some  
new wall  
Or gulf of mystery, which thou alone,  
Imaginative Faith! canst overleap,  
In progress toward the fount of Love,—  
the throne  
Of Power whose ministers the records  
keep  
Of periods fixed, and laws established,  
less  
Flesh to exalt than prove its nothingness.

XV.

ON ENTERING DOUGLAS BAY, ISLE OF  
MAN.

"Dignum laude virum Musa vetat mori."

THE feudal Keep, the bastions of Cohorn,  
Even when they rose to check or to repel  
Tides of aggressive war, oft served as  
well  
Greedy ambition, armed to treat with  
scorn

Just limits; but yon Tower, whose smiles  
adorn  
This perilous bay, stands clear of all  
offence;  
Blest work it is of love and innocence,  
A Tower of refuge built for the else  
forlorn.  
Spare it, ye waves, and lift the mariner,  
Struggling for life, into its saving arms!  
Spare, too, the human helpers! Do they  
stir  
Mid your fierce shock like men afraid to  
die?  
No; their dread service nerves the heart  
it warms,  
And they are led by noble HILLARY.<sup>1</sup>

XVI.

BY THE SEA-SHORE, ISLE OF MAN.

WHY stand we gazing on the sparkling  
Brine,  
With wonder smit by its transparency,  
And all-enraptured with its purity?—  
Because the unstained, the clear, the  
crystalline,  
Have ever in them something of benign;  
Whether in gem, in water, or in sky,  
A sleeping infant's brow, or wakeful eye  
Of a young maiden, only not divine.  
Scarcely the hand forbears to dip its palm  
For beverage drawn as from a mountain-  
well.  
Temptation centres in the liquid Calm;  
Our daily raiment seems no obstacle  
To instantaneous plunging in, deep Sea!  
And revelling in long embrace with thee<sup>2</sup>.

XVII.

ISLE OF MAN.

A YOUTH too certain of his power to  
wade  
On the smooth bottom of this clear bright  
sea,  
To sight so shallow, with a bather's glee,  
Leapt from this rock, and but for timely  
aid

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 324.

<sup>2</sup> The sea-water on the coast of the Isle of Man  
is singularly pure and beautiful.

He, by the alluring element betrayed, 5  
 Had perished. Then might Sea-nymphs  
 (and with sighs  
 Of self-reproach) have chanted elegies  
 Bewailing his sad fate, when he was laid  
 In peaceful earth: for, doubtless, he was  
 frank,  
 Utterly in himself devoid of guile; 10  
 Knew not the double-dealing of a smile;  
 Nor aught that makes men's promises  
 a blank,  
 Or deadly snare: and He survives to bless  
 The Power that saved him in his strange  
 distress.

## XVIII.

## ISLE OF MAN.

DID pangs of grief for lenient time too  
 keen,  
 Grief that devouring waves had caused—  
 or guilt  
 Which they had witnessed, sway the man  
 who built  
 This Homestead, placed where nothing  
 could be seen,  
 Nought heard, of ocean troubled or serene?  
 A tired Ship-soldier on paternal land, 6  
 That o'er the channel holds august com-  
 mand,  
 The dwelling raised,—a veteran Marine.  
 He, in disgust, turned from the neigh-  
 bouring sea  
 To shun the memory of a listless life 10  
 That hung between two callings. May  
 no strife  
 More hurtful here beset him, doomed  
 though free,  
 Self-doomed, to worse inaction, till his eye  
 Shrink from the daily sight of earth and  
 sky!

## XIX.

## BY A RETIRED MARINER.

A Friend of the Author.

FROM early youth I ploughed the restless  
 Main,  
 My mind as restless and as apt to change;  
 Through every clime and ocean did I range,  
 In hope at length a competence to gain;

For poor to Sea I went, and poor I still  
 remain.  
 Year after year I strove, but strove in vain, 5  
 And hardships manifold did I endure,  
 For Fortune on me never deigned to  
 smile;  
 Yet I at last a resting-place have found,  
 With just enough life's comforts to procure,  
 In a snug Cove on this our favoured Isle,  
 A peaceful spot where Nature's gifts  
 abound;  
 Then sure I have no reason to complain,  
 Though poor to Sea I went, and poor  
 I still remain.

## XX.

## AT BALA-SALA, ISLE OF MAN.

Supposed to be written by a Friend.

BROKEN in fortune, but in mind entire  
 And sound in principle, I seek repose  
 Where ancient trees this convent-pile  
 enclose,  
 In ruin beautiful. When vain desire  
 Intrudes on peace, I pray the eternal Sire  
 To cast a soul-subduing shade on me, 6  
 A grey-haired, pensive, thankful Refugee;  
 A shade—but with some sparks of hea-  
 venly fire  
 Once to these cells vouchsafed. And  
 when I note  
 The old Tower's brow yellowed as with  
 the beams 10  
 Of sunset ever there, albeit streams  
 Of stormy weather-stains that semblance  
 wrought,  
 I thank the silent Monitor, and say  
 "Shine so, my aged brow, at all hours of  
 the day!"

## XXI.

## TYNWALD HILL.

ONCE on the top of Tynwald's formal  
 mound  
 (Still marked with green turf circles  
 narrowing  
 Stage above stage) would sit this Island's  
 King,

<sup>1</sup> Rushen Abbey.

The laws to promulgate, enrobed and  
crowned;  
While, compassing the little mound  
around, 5  
Degrees and Orders stood, each under  
each:  
Now, like to things within fate's easiest  
reach,  
The power is merged, the pomp a grave  
has found.  
Off with yon cloud, old Snafell! that  
thine eye  
Over three Realms may take its widest  
range; 10  
And let, for them, thy fountains utter  
strange  
Voices, thy winds break forth in pro-  
phesy,  
If the whole State must suffer mortal  
change,  
Like Mona's miniature of sovereignty.

XXII.

DESPOND who will—I heard a voice ex-  
claim,  
“Though fierce the assault, and shattered  
the defence,  
It cannot be that Britain's social frame,  
The glorious work of time and provi-  
dence,  
Before a flying season's rash pretence 5  
Should fall; that She, whose virtue put  
to shame,  
When Europe prostrate lay, the Con-  
queror's aim,  
Should perish, self-subverted. Black and  
dense  
The cloud is; but brings *that* a day of  
doom  
To Liberty? Her sun is up the while, 10  
That orb whose beams round Saxon  
Alfred shone:  
Then laugh, ye innocent Vales! ye  
Streams, sweep on,  
Nor let one billow of our heaven-blest  
Isle  
Toss in the fanning wind a humbler  
plume.”

XXIII.

IN THE FRITH OF CLYDE, AILSA CRAG.  
During an Eclipse of the Sun, July 17.  
SINCE risen from ocean, ocean to defy,  
Appeared the Crag of Ailsa, ne'er did  
morn  
With gleaming lights more gracefully  
adorn  
His sides, or wreath with mist his fore-  
head high:  
Now, faintly darkening with the sun's  
eclipse, 5  
Still is he seen, in lone sublimity.  
Towering above the sea and little ships;  
For dwarfs the tallest seem while sailing  
by,  
Each for her haven; with her freight of  
Care,  
Pleasure, or Grief, and Toil that seldom  
looks 10  
Into the secret of to-morrow's fare;  
Though poor, yet rich, without the wealth  
of books,  
Or aught that watchful Love to Nature  
owes  
For her mute Powers, fixed Forms, or  
transient Shows.

XXIV.

ON THE FRITH OF CLYDE.

In a Steamboat.

ARRAN! a single-crested Teneriffe,  
A St. Helena next—in shape and hue,  
Varying her crowded peaks and ridges  
blue;  
Who but must covet a cloud-seat, or skiff  
Built for the air, or winged Hippogriff? 5  
That he might fly, where no one could  
pursue,  
From this dull Monster and her sooty  
crew;  
And, as a God, light on thy topmost cliff.  
Impotent wish! which reason would  
despise  
If the mind knew no union of extremes,  
No natural bond between the boldest  
schemes 11

Ambition frames and heart-humilities.  
 Beneath stern mountains many a soft  
     vale lies,  
 And lofty springs give birth to lowly  
     streams.

## XXV.

## ON REVISITING DUNOLLY CASTLE.

See former Series, p. 388.

THE captive Bird was gone;—to cliff or  
     moor

Perchance had flown, delivered by the  
     storm;

Or he had pined, and sunk to feed the  
     worm:

Him found we not: but, climbing a tall  
     tower,

There saw, impaved with rude fidelity 5  
 Of art mosaic, in a roofless floor,

An Eagle with stretched wings, but beam-  
     less eye—

An Eagle that could neither wail nor soar.  
 Effigy of the Vanished—(shall I dare

To call thee so?) or symbol of fierce deeds  
 And of the towering courage which past

times 11  
 Rejoiced in—take, whate'er thou be, a share,

Not undeserved, of the memorial rhymes  
 That animate my way where'er it leads!

## XXVI.

## THE DUNOLLY EAGLE.

NOT to the clouds, not to the cliff, he flew;  
 But when a storm, on sea or mountain  
     bred,

Came and delivered him, alone he sped  
 Into the castle-dungeon's darkest mew.

Now near his master's house in open view  
 He dwells, and hears indignant tempests

howl, 6  
 Kennelled and chained. Ye tame domestic

fowl,  
 Beware of him! Thou, saucy cockatoo,

Look to thy plumage and thy life!—The  
     roe,

Fleet as the west wind, is for him no  
     quarry; 10

Balanced in ether he will never tarry,  
 Eyeing the sea's blue depths. Poor Bird!

even so

Doth man of brother man a creature make  
 That clings to slavery for its own sad sake.

## XXVII.

WRITTEN IN A BLANK LEAF OF  
 MACPHERSON'S OSSIAN.

[Composed 1824.—Published 1827.]

OFT have I caught, upon a fitful breeze,  
 Fragments of far-off melodies,

With ear not coveting the whole,  
 A part so charmed the pensive soul:

While a dark storm before my sight 5  
 Was yielding, on a mountain height

Loose vapours have I watched, that won  
 Prismatic colours from the sun;

Nor felt a wish that heaven would show  
 The image of its perfect bow. 10

What need, then, of these finished Strains?  
 Away with counterfeit Remains!

An abbey in its lone recess,  
 A temple of the wilderness,

Wrecks though they be, announce with  
     feeling 15

The majesty of honest dealing.  
 Spirit of Ossian! if imboud

In language thou may'st yet be found,  
 If aught (intrusted to the pen

Or floating on the tongues of men, 20  
 Albeit shattered and impaired)

Subsist thy dignity to guard,  
 In concert with memorial claim

Of old grey stone, and high-born name  
 That cleaves to rock or pillared cave 25

Where moans the blast, or beats the wave,  
 Let Truth, stern arbitress of all,

Interpret that Original,  
 And for presumptuous wrongs atone;—

Authentic words be given, or none! 30  
 Time is not blind;—yet He who spares

Pyramid pointing to the stars,  
 Hath preyed with ruthless appetite

On all that marked the primal flight  
 Of the poetic ecstasy 35

Into the land of mystery.  
 No tongue is able to rehearse

One measure, Orpheus! of thy verse;  
 Musæus, stationed with his lyre

Supreme among the Elysian quire, 40  
 Is, for the dwellers upon earth,

Mute as a lark ere morning's birth.

Why grieve for these, though past away  
The music, and extinct the lay?  
When thousands, by severer doom, 45  
Full early to the silent tomb  
Have sunk, at Nature's call; or strayed  
From hope and promise, self-betrayed;  
The garland withering on their brows;  
Stung with remorse for broken vows; 50  
Frantic—else how might they rejoice?  
And friendless, by their own sad choice!

Hail, Bards of mightier grasp! on you  
I chiefly call, the chosen Few,  
Who cast not off the acknowledged guide,  
Who faltered not, nor turned aside; 55  
Whose lofty genius could survive  
Privation, under sorrow thrive;  
In whom the fiery Muse revered  
The symbol of a snow-white beard, 60  
Bedewed with meditative tears  
Dropped from the lenient cloud of years.

Brothers in soul! though distant times  
Produced you nursed in various climes,  
Ye, when the orb of life had waned, 65  
A plenitude of love retained:  
Hence, while in you each sad regret  
By corresponding hope was met,  
Ye lingered among human kind,  
Sweet voices for the passing wind; 70  
Departing sunbeams, loth to stop,  
Though smiling on the last hill-top!  
Such to the tender-hearted maid  
Even ere her joys begin to fade;  
Such, haply, to the rugged chief 75  
By fortune crushed, or tamed by grief;  
Appears, on Morven's lonely shore,  
Dim-gleaming through imperfect lore,  
The Son of Fingal; such was blind  
Maeonides of ampler mind; 80  
Such Milton, to the fountain-head  
Of glory by Urania led!

# XXVIII.

## CAVE OF STAFFA.

WE saw, but surely, in the motley crowd,  
Not One of us has felt the far-famed sight;  
How *could* we feel it? each the other's  
blight,  
Hurried and hurrying, volatile and loud.  
O for those motions only that invite 5

The Ghost of Fingal to his tuneful Cave  
By the breeze entered, and wave after  
wave  
Softly embosoming the timid light!  
And by *one* Votary who at will might  
stand 9  
Gazing and take into his mind and heart,  
With undistracted reverence, the effect  
Of those proportions where the almighty  
hand  
That made the worlds, the sovereign  
Architect,  
Has deigned to work as if with human  
Art!

# XXIX.

## CAVE OF STAFFA.

After the Crowd had departed.

THANKS for the lessons of this Spot—fit  
school  
For the presumptuous thoughts that would  
assign  
Mechanic laws to agency divine;  
And, measuring heaven by earth, would  
overrule  
Infinite Power. The pillared vestibule, 5  
Expanding yet precise, the roof embowed.  
Might seem designed to humble man,  
when proud  
Of his best workmanship by plan and tool.  
Down-bearing with his whole Atlantic  
weight  
Of tide and tempest on the Structure's  
base, 10  
And flashing to that Structure's topmost  
height,  
Ocean has proved its strength, and of its  
grace  
In calms is conscious, finding for his  
freight  
Of softest music some responsive place.

# XXX.

## CAVE OF STAFFA.

YE shadowy Beings, that have rights and  
claims  
In every cell of Fingal's mystic Grot,  
Where are ye? Driven or venturing to  
the spot,

Our fathers glimpses caught of your thin  
 Frames,  
 And, by your mien and bearing, knew  
 your names; 5  
 And they could hear his ghostly song  
 who trod  
 Earth, till the flesh lay on him like a load,  
 While he struck his desolate harp without  
 hopes or aims.  
 Vanished ye are, but subject to recall;  
 Why keep we else the instincts whose  
 dread law 10  
 Ruled here of yore, till what men felt  
 they saw,  
 Not by black arts but magic natural!  
 If eyes be still sworn vassals of belief,  
 Yon light shapes forth a Bard, that shade  
 a Chief.

## XXXI.

FLOWERS ON THE TOP OF THE PILLARS  
 AT THE ENTRANCE OF THE CAVE.

HOPE smiled when your nativity was cast,  
 Children of Summer! Ye fresh Flowers  
 that brave  
 What Summer here escapes not, the fierce  
 wave,  
 And whole artillery of the western blast,  
 Battering the Temple's front, its long-  
 drawn nave 5  
 Smiting, as if each moment were their last.  
 But ye, bright Flowers, on frieze and  
 architrave  
 Survive, and once again the Pile stands  
 fast:  
 Calm as the Universe, from speculant towers  
 Of heaven contemplated by Spirits pure  
 With mute astonishment, it stands sus-  
 tained 11  
 Through every part in symmetry, to  
 endure,  
 Unhurt, the assault of Time with all his  
 hours,  
 As the supreme Artificer ordained.

## XXXII.

## IONA.

ON to Iona!—What can she afford  
 To us save matter for a thoughtful sigh,  
 Heaved over ruin with stability

In urgent contrast? To diffuse the WORD  
 (Thy Paramount, mighty Nature! and  
 Time's Lord) 5  
 Her Temples rose, 'mid pagan gloom; but  
 why,  
 Even for a moment, has our verse de-  
 plored  
 Their wrongs, since they fulfilled their  
 destiny?  
 And when, subjected to a common doom  
 Of mutability, those far-famed Piles 10  
 Shall disappear from both the sister Isles,  
 Iona's Saints, forgetting not past days,  
 Garlands shall wear of amaranthine bloom,  
 While heaven's vast sea of voices chants  
 their praise.

## XXXIII.

## IONA.

## Upon Landing.

How sad a welcome! To each voyager  
 Some ragged child holds up for sale a store  
 Of wave-worn pebbles, pleading on the  
 shore  
 Where once came monk and nun with  
 gentle stir,  
 Blessings to give, news ask, or suit prefer.  
 Yet is yon neat trim church a grateful  
 speck 6  
 Of novelty amid the sacred wreck  
 Strewn far and wide. Think, proud  
 Philosopher!  
 Fallen though she be, this Glory of the  
 west,  
 Still on her sons the beams of mercy  
 shine; 10  
 And "hopes, perhaps more heavenly  
 bright than thine,  
 A grace by thee unsought and unpossessed,  
 A faith more fixed, a rapture more divine  
 Shall gild their passage to eternal rest."

## XXXIV.

## THE BLACK STONES OF IONA.

[See Martin's *Voyage among the Western Isles*.]  
 HERE on their knees men swore: the  
 stones were black,  
 Black in the people's minds and words,  
 yet they  
 Were at that time, as now, in colour grey.

But what is colour, if upon the rack  
Of conscience souls are placed by deeds  
that lack 5  
Concord with oaths? What differ night  
and day  
Then, when before the Perjured on his way  
Hell opens, and the heavens in vengeance  
crack  
Above his head uplifted in vain prayer  
To Saint, or Fiend, or to the Godhead  
whom 10  
He had insulted—Peasant, King, or  
Thane?  
Fly where the culprit may, guilt meets a  
doom;  
And, from invisible worlds at need laid  
bare,  
Come links for social order's awful chain.

XXXV.

HOMEWARD we turn. Isle of Columba's Cell,  
Where Christian piety's soul-cheering  
spark  
(Kindled from Heaven between the light  
and dark  
Of time) shone like the morning-star,  
farewell!—  
And fare thee well, to Fancy visible, 5  
Remote St. Kilda, lone and loved sea-  
mark  
For many a voyage made in her swift  
bark,  
When with more hues than in the rainbow  
dwell  
Thou a mysterious intercourse dost hold, 9  
Extracting from clear skies and air serene,  
And out of sun-bright waves, a lucid veil,  
That thickens, spreads, and, mingling  
fold with fold,  
Makes known, when thou no longer canst  
be seen,  
Thy whereabouts, to warn the approaching  
sail.

XXXVI.

GREENOCK.

Per me si va nella Città dolente.

WE have not passed into a doleful City,  
We who were led to-day down a grim dell,  
By some too boldly named "the Jaws of  
Hell:"

Where be the wretched ones, the sights  
for pity?  
These crowded streets resound no plain-  
tive ditty:— 5  
As from the hive where bees in summer  
dwell,  
Sorrow seems here excluded; and that  
knell,  
It neither damps the gay, nor checks the  
witty.  
Alas! too busy Rival of old Tyre,  
Whose merchants Princes were, whose  
decks were thrones; 10  
Soon may the punctual sea in vain re-  
spire  
To serve thy need, in union with that  
Clyde  
Whose nursing current brawls o'er mossy  
stones,  
The poor, the lonely, herdsman's joy and  
pride.

XXXVII.

"THERE!" said a Stripling, pointing with  
meet pride  
Towards a low roof with green trees half  
concealed,  
"Is Mosgiel Farm; and that's the very  
field  
Where Burns ploughed up the Daisy."  
Far and wide  
A plain below stretched seaward, while,  
descried 5  
Above sea-clouds; the Peaks of Arran  
rose;  
And, by that simple notice, the repose  
Of earth, sky, sea, and air, was vivi-  
fied.  
Beneath "the random *bield* of clod or  
stone"  
Myriads of daisies have shone forth in  
flower 10  
Near the lark's nest, and in their natural  
hour  
Have passed away; less happy than the  
One  
That, by the unwilling ploughshare, died  
to prove  
The tender charm of poetry and love.

## XXXVIII.

## THE RIVER EDEN, CUMBERLAND.

EDEN! till now thy beauty had I viewed  
By glimpses only, and confess with shame  
That verse of mine, whate'er its varying  
mood,

Repeats but once the sound of thy sweet  
name:

Yet fetched from Paradise that honour  
came,

Rightfully borne; for Nature gives thee  
flowers

That have no rivals among British bowers;  
And thy bold rocks are worthy of their  
fame.

Measuring thy course, fair Stream! at  
length I pay

To my life's neighbour dues of neighbour-  
hood;

But I have traced thee on thy winding  
way

With pleasure sometimes by this thought  
restrained—

For things far off we toil, while many a  
good

Not sought, because too near, is never  
gained.

## XXXIX.

## MONUMENT OF MRS. HOWARD

(by Nollekens),

In Wetheral Church, near Corby, on the banks  
of the Eden.

STRETCHED on the dying Mother's lap,  
lies dead

Her new-born Babe; dire ending of bright  
hope!

But Sculpture here, with the divinest  
scope

Of luminous faith, heavenward hath raised  
that head

So patiently; and through one hand has  
spread

A touch so tender for the insensate Child—  
(Earth's lingering love to parting re-

conciled,  
Brief parting, for the spirit is all but  
fled)—

That we, who contemplate the turns of  
life

Through this still medium, are consoled  
and cheered;

Feel with the Mother, think the severed  
Wife

Is less to be lamented than revered;  
And own that Art, triumphant over strife

And pain, hath powers to Eternity en-  
deared.

## XL.

## SUGGESTED BY THE FOREGOING.

TRANQUILITY! the sovereign aim wert  
thou

In heathen schools of philosophic lore;  
Heart-stricken by stern destiny of yore

The Tragic Muse thee served with thought-  
ful vow;

And what of hope Elysium could allow  
Was fondly seized by Sculpture, to restore

Peace to the Mourner. But when He  
who wore

The crown of thorns around his bleeding  
brow

Warmed our sad being with celestial  
light,

Then Arts, which still had drawn a soften-  
ing grace

From shadowy fountains of the Infinite,  
Communed with that Idea face to face:

And move around it now as planets run,  
Each in its orbit round the central Sun.

## XLI.

## NUNNERY.

THE floods are roused, and will not soon  
be weary;

Down from the Pennine Alps<sup>1</sup> how fiercely  
sweeps

CROGLIN, the stately Eden's tributary!  
He raves, or through some moody passage  
creeps

Plotting new mischief—out again he leaps  
Into broad light, and sends, through

regions airy,

That voice which soothed the Nuns while  
on the steepes

<sup>1</sup> The chain of Crossfell.

They knelt in prayer, or sang to blissful  
Mary.  
That union ceased: then, cleaving easy  
walks  
Through crags, and smoothing paths beset  
with danger, 10  
Came studious Taste; and many a pensive  
stranger  
Dreams on the banks, and to the river talks.  
What change shall happen next to Nun-  
nery Dell?  
Canal, and Viaduct, and Railway, tell!

XLII.

STEAMBOATS, VIADUCTS, AND RAIL-  
WAYS.

MOTIONS and Means, on land and sea at  
war  
With old poetic feeling, not for this,  
Shall ye, by Poets even, be judged amiss!  
Nor shall your presence, howsoever it mar  
The loveliness of Nature, prove a bar 5  
To the Mind's gaining that prophetic sense  
Of future change, that point of vision,  
whence  
May be discovered what in soul ye are.  
In spite of all that beauty may disown  
In your harsh features, Nature doth em-  
brace 10  
Her lawful offspring in Man's art; and  
Time,  
Pleased with your triumphs o'er his  
brother Space,  
Accepts from your bold hands the pro-  
ffered crown  
Of hope, and smiles on you with cheer  
sublime.

XLIII.

THE MONUMENT COMMONLY CALLED  
LONG MEG AND HER DAUGHTERS,  
NEAR THE RIVER EDEN.

[Composed 1821.—Published 1822<sup>1</sup>; ed. 1827.]

A WEIGHT of awe, not easy to be borne,  
Fell suddenly upon my Spirit—cast  
From the dread bosom of the unknown  
past,

When first I saw that family forlorn.  
Speak Thou, whose massy strength and  
stature scorn 5  
The power of years—pre-eminent, and  
placed  
Apart, to overlook the circle vast—  
Speak, Giant-mother! tell it to the Morn  
While she dispels the cumbrous shades of  
Night;  
Let the Moon hear, emerging from a  
cloud; 10  
At whose behest uprose on British ground  
That Sisterhood, in hieroglyphic round  
Forth-shadowing, some have deemed, the  
infinite  
The inviolable God, that tames the  
proud<sup>2</sup>!

XLIV.

LOWTHER.

LOWTHER! in thy majestic Pile are seen  
Cathedral pomp and grace, in apt accord  
With the baronial castle's sterner mien;  
Union significant of God adored,  
And charters won and guarded by the  
sword 5  
Of ancient honour; whence that goodly  
state  
Of polity which wise men venerate,  
And will maintain, if God his help afford.  
Hourly the democratic torrent swells;  
For airy promises and hopes suborned 10  
The strength of backward-looking  
thoughts is scorned.  
Fall if ye must, ye Towers and Pinnacles,  
With what ye symbolise; authentic Story  
Will say, Ye disappeared with England's  
Glory!

XLV.

TO THE EARL OF LONSDALE.

"Magistratus indicat virum."

LONSDALE! it were unworthy of a Guest,  
Whose heart with gratitude to thee in-  
clines,  
If he should speak, by fancy touched, of  
signs

<sup>1</sup> In the little book entitled, *A Description of the Scenery of the Lakes, etc.*—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> See Note, p. 925.

On thy Abode harmoniously imprest,  
Yet be unmoved with wishes to attest 5  
How in thy mind and moral frame agree  
Fortitude, and that Christian Charity  
Which, filling, consecrates the human  
breast.

And if the Motto on thy 'scutcheon teach  
With truth, "THE MAGISTRACY SHOWS  
THE MAN;" 10

That searching test thy public course has  
stood ;

As will be owned alike by bad and good,  
Soon as the measuring of life's little span  
Shall place thy virtues out of Envy's  
reach<sup>1</sup>.

## XXVI.

## THE SOMNAMBULIST.

[Composed before 1827 (1807-8 ?).—Published  
1835.]

LIST, ye who pass by Lyulph's Tower<sup>2</sup>

At eve ; how softly then

Doth Aira-force, that torrent hoarse,

Speak from the woody glen !

Fit music for a solemn valed 5

And holier seems the ground

To him who catches on the gale

The spirit of a mournful tale,

Embodied in the sound.

Not far from that fair site whereon 10

The Pleasure-house is reared,

As story says, in antique days

A stern-browed house appeared ;

Foil to a Jewel rich in light

There set, and guarded well ; 15

Cage for a Bird of plumage bright,

Sweet-voiced, nor wishing for a flight

Beyond her native dell.

To win this bright Bird from her cage,

To make this Gem their own, 20

Came Barons bold, with store of gold,

And Knights of high renown ;

But one She prized, and only one ;

Sir Eglamore was he ;

Full happy season, when was known, 25

Ye Dales and Hills ! to you alone

Their mutual loyalty—

Known chiefly, Aira ! to thy glen,

Thy brook, and bowers of holly ;

Where Passion caught what Nature  
taught, 30

That all but love is folly ;

Where Fact with Fancy stooped to play ;

Doubt came not, nor regret—

To trouble hours that winged their way,

As if through an immortal day 35

Whose sun could never set.

But in old times Love dwelt not long

Sequestered with repose ;

Best thro' the fire of chaste desire,

Fanned by the breath of foes. 40

"A conquering lance is beauty's test,  
And proves the Lover true ;"

So spake Sir Eglamore, and pressed

The drooping Emma to his breast,

And looked a blind adieu. 45

They parted.—Well with him it fared

Through wide-spread regions errant ;

A knight of proof in love's behoof,

The thirst of fame his warrant :

And She her happiness can build 50

On woman's quiet hours ;

Though faint, compared with spear and  
shield,

The solace beads and masses yield,

And needlework and flowers.

Yet blest was Emma when she heard 55

Her Champion's praise recounted ;

Though brain would swim, and eyes grow  
dim,

And high her blushes mounted ;

Or when a bold heroic lay

She warbled from full heart ; 60

Delightful blossoms for the May

Of absence ! but they will not stay,

Born only to depart.

Hope wanes with her, while lustre fills

Whatever path he chooses ; 65

As if his orb, that owns no curb,

Received the light hers loses.

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 925.

<sup>2</sup> A pleasure-house built by the late Duke of Norfolk upon the banks of Ullswater. FORCE is the word used in the Lake District for Water-fall.

He comes not back ; an ampler space  
Requires for nobler deeds ;  
He ranges on from place to place, 70  
Till of his doings is no trace,  
But what her fancy breeds.

His fame may spread, but in the past  
Her spirit finds its centre ;  
Clear sight She has of what he was, 75  
And that would now content her.  
"Still is he my devoted Knight?"  
The tear in answer flows ;  
Month falls on month with heavier  
weight ;  
Day sickens round her, and the night 80  
Is empty of repose.

In sleep She sometimes walked abroad,  
Deep sighs with quick words blending,  
Like that pale Queen whose hands are  
seen  
With fancied spots contending ; 85  
But *she* is innocent of blood,—  
The moon is not more pure  
That shines aloft, while through the wood  
She thrids her way, the sounding Flood  
Her melancholy lure ! 90

While 'mid the fern-brake sleeps the doe,  
And owls alone are waking,  
In white arrayed, glides on the Maid  
The downward pathway taking,  
That leads her to the torrent's side 95  
And to a holly bower ;  
By whom on this still night desiered?  
By whom in that lone place espied?  
By thee, Sir Eglamore !

A wandering Ghost, so thinks the Knight,  
His coming step has thwarted, 101  
Beneath the boughs that heard their  
vows,  
Within whose shade they parted.  
Hush, hush, the busy Sleeper see !  
Perplexed her fingers seem, 105  
As if they from the holly tree  
Green twigs would pluck, as rapidly,  
Flung from her to the stream.

What means the Spectre? Why intent  
To violate the Tree, 110  
Thought Eglamore, by which I swore  
Unfading constancy?

Here am I, and to-morrow's sun,  
To her I left, shall prove  
That bliss is ne'er so surely won 115  
As when a circuit has been run  
Of valour, truth, and love.

So from the spot whereon he stood,  
He moved with stealthy pace ;  
And, drawing nigh, with his living eye,  
He recognised the face ; 121  
And, whispers caught, and speeches small,  
Some to the green-leaved tree,  
Some muttered to the torrent-fall ;—  
"Roar on, and bring him with thy call ;  
I heard, and so may He !" 125

Soul-shattered was the Knight, nor knew  
If Emma's Ghost it were,  
Or boding Shade, or if the Maid  
Her very self stood there. 130  
He touched ; what followed who shall  
tell ?

The soft touch snapped the thread  
Of slumber—shrieking back she fell,  
And the Stream whirled her down the  
dell  
Along its foaming bed. 135

In plunged the Knight!—when on firm  
ground

The rescued Maiden lay,  
Her eyes grew bright with blissful light,  
Confusion passed away ;  
She heard, ere to the throne of grace 140  
Her faithful Spirit flew,  
His voice—beheld his speaking face ;  
And, dying, from his own embrace,  
She felt that he was true.

So was he reconciled to life : 145  
Brief words may speak the rest ;  
Within the dell he built a cell,  
And there was Sorrow's guest ;  
In hermits' weeds repose he found,  
From vain temptations free ; 150  
Beside the torrent dwelling—bound  
By one deep heart-controlling sound,  
And awed to piety.

Wild stream of Aira, hold thy course,  
Nor fear memorial lays, 155  
Where clouds that spread in solemn  
shade,  
Are edged with golden rays !

Dear art thou to the light of heaven,  
 Though minister of sorrow ;  
 Sweet is thy voice at pensive even ; 160  
 And thou, in lovers' hearts forgiven,  
 Shalt take thy place with Yarrow !

## XLVII.

TO CORDELIA M——.

Hallsteads, Ullswater.

Not in the mines beyond the western main,  
 You say, Cordelia, was the metal sought,  
 Which a fine skill, of Indian growth, has  
 wrought

Into this flexible yet faithful Chain ;  
 Nor is it silver of romantic Spain ; 5  
 But from our loved Helvellyn's depths  
 was brought,

Our own domestic mountain. Thing and  
 thought

Mix strangely ; trifles light, and partly  
 vain,

Can prop, as you have learnt, our nobler  
 being :

Yes, Lady, while about your neck is  
 wound 10

(Your casual glance oft meeting) this  
 bright cord,

What witchery, for pure gifts of inward  
 seeing,  
 Lurks in it, Memory's Helper, Fancy's  
 Lord,  
 For precious tremblings in your bosom  
 found !

## XLVIII.

Most sweet it is with unuplifted eyes  
 To pace the ground, if path be there or  
 none,

While a fair region round the traveller  
 lies

Which he forbears again to look upon ; 4  
 Pleased rather with some soft ideal scene,  
 The work of Fancy, or some happy tone  
 Of meditation, slipping in between  
 The beauty coming and the beauty gone.  
 If Thought and Love desert us, from that  
 day

Let us break off all commerce with the  
 Muse : 10

With Thought and Love companions of  
 our way,

Whate'er the senses take or may refuse,  
 The Mind's internal heaven shall shed  
 her dews

Of inspiration on the humblest lay.

# POEMS OF SENTIMENT AND REFLECTION.

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## I.

### EXPOSTULATION AND REPLY.

[Composed 1798.—Published 1795.]

"WHY, William, on that old grey stone,  
Thus for the length of half a day,  
Why, William, sit you thus alone,  
And dream your time away?

"Where are your books?—that light be-  
queathed 5  
To Beings else forlorn and blind!  
Up! up! and drink the spirit breathed  
From dead men to their kind.

"You look round on your Mother Earth,  
As if she for no purpose bore you; 10  
As if you were her first-born birth,  
And none had lived before you!"

One morning thus, by Esthwaite lake,  
When life was sweet, I knew not why,  
To me my good friend Matthew spake, 15  
And thus I made reply:

"The eye—it cannot choose but see;  
We cannot bid the ear be still;  
Our bodies feel, where'er they be,  
Against or with our will. 20

"Nor less I deem that there are Powers  
Which of themselves our minds impress;  
That we can feed this mind of ours  
In a wise passiveness.

"Think you, 'mid all this mighty sum 25  
Of things for ever speaking,  
That nothing of itself will come,  
But we must still be seeking?

"—Then ask not wherefore, here, alone,  
Conversing as I may, 30  
I sit upon this old grey stone,  
And dream my time away."

## II.

### THE TABLES TURNED.

AN EVENING SCENE ON THE SAME  
SUBJECT.

[Composed 1795.—Published 1795.]

UP! up! my Friend, and quit your  
books;

Or surely you'll grow double:  
Up! up! my Friend, and clear your  
looks;

Why all this toil and trouble?

The sun, above the mountain's head, 5  
A freshening lustre mellow  
Through all the long green fields has  
spread,

His first sweet evening yellow.

Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife:  
Come, hear the woodland linnet, 10  
How sweet his music! on my life,  
There's more of wisdom in it.

And hark! how blithe the throistle sings!  
He, too, is no mean preacher:  
Come forth into the light of things, 15  
Let Nature be your Teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,  
Our minds and hearts to bless—  
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,  
Truth breathed by cheerfulness. 20

One impulse from a vernal wood  
May teach you more of man,  
Of moral evil and of good,  
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings; 25  
Our meddling intellect  
Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of  
things:—  
We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art;  
Close up those barren leaves;  
Come forth, and bring with you a heart  
That watches and receives.

## III.

## LINES WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING.

[Composed 1798.—Published 1798.]

I HEARD a thousand blended notes,  
While in a grove I sate reclined,  
In that sweet mood when pleasant  
thoughts  
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link  
The human soul that through me ran;  
And much it grieved my heart to think  
What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that green  
bower,  
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths;  
And 'tis my faith that every flower  
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played,  
Their thoughts I cannot measure:—  
But the least motion which they made,  
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan,  
To catch the breezy air;  
And I must think, do all I can,  
That there was pleasure there.

If this belief from heaven be sent,  
If such be Nature's holy plan,  
Have I not reason to lament  
What man has made of man?

## IV.

## A CHARACTER.

[Composed probably September or October, 1800.  
—Published 1800.]

I MARVEL how Nature could ever find  
space  
For so many strange contrasts in one  
human face:  
There's thought and no thought, and  
there's paleness and bloom  
And bustle and sluggishness, pleasure  
and gloom.

There's weakness, and strength both re-  
dundant and vain;  
Such strength as, if ever affliction and  
pain  
Could pierce through a temper that's soft  
to disease,  
Would be rational peace—a philosopher's  
ease.

There's indifference, alike when he fails  
or succeeds,  
And attention full ten times as much as  
there needs;  
Pride where there's no envy, there's so  
much of joy;  
And mildness, and spirit both forward  
and coy.

There's freedom, and sometimes a diffi-  
dent stare  
Of shame scarcely seeming to know that  
she's there,  
There's virtue, the title it surely may  
claim,  
Yet wants heaven knows what to be  
worthy the name.

This picture from nature may seem to  
depart,  
Yet the Man would at once run away  
with your heart;  
And I for five centuries right gladly  
would be  
Such an odd such a kind happy creature  
as he.

## V.

## TO MY SISTER.

[Composed 1798.—Published 1798.]

It is the first mild day of March:  
Each minute sweeter than before,  
The redbreast sings from the tall larch  
That stands beside our door.

There is a blessing in the air,  
Which seems a sense of joy to yield  
To the bare trees, and mountains bare,  
And grass in the green field.

My sister! ('tis a wish of mine)  
Now that our morning meal is done,  
Make haste, your morning task resign;  
Come forth and feel the sun.

Edward will come with you;—and, pray,  
Put on with speed your woodland dress;  
And bring no book: for this one day 15  
We'll give to idleness.

No joyless forms shall regulate  
Our living calendar:  
We from to-day, my Friend, will date  
The opening of the year. 20

Love, now a universal birth,  
From heart to heart is stealing,  
From earth to man, from man to earth:  
—It is the hour of feeling.

One moment now may give us more 25  
Than years of toiling reason:  
Our minds shall drink at every pore  
The spirit of the season.

Some silent laws our hearts will make,  
Which they shall long obey: 30  
We for the year to come may take  
Our temper from to-day.

And from the blessed power that rolls  
About, below, above,  
We'll frame the measure of our souls: 35  
They shall be tuned to love.

Then come, my Sister! come, I pray,  
With speed put on your woodland dress;  
And bring no book: for this one day  
We'll give to idleness. 40

## VI.

## SIMON LEE,

## THE OLD HUNTSMAN;

With an incident in which he was concerned.

[Composed 1798.—Published 1798.]

In the sweet shire of Cardigan,  
Not far from Pleasant Ivor-hall,  
An old Man dwells, a little man,—  
'Tis said he once was tall.  
Full five-and-thirty years he lived 5  
A running huntsman merry;  
And still the centre of his cheek  
Is red as a ripe cherry.

No man like him the horn could sound,  
And hill and valley rang with glee 10  
When Echo bandied, round and round,  
The halloo of Simon Lee.

In those proud days, he little cared  
For husbandry or tillage;  
To blither tasks did Simon rouse 15  
The sleepers of the village.

He all the country could outrun,  
Could leave both man and horse behind;  
And often, ere the chase was done,  
He reeled, and was stone-blind. 20  
And still there's something in the world  
At which his heart rejoices;  
For when the chiming hounds are out,  
He dearly loves their voices!

But, oh the heavy change!—bereft 25  
Of health, strength, friends, and kindred,  
see!

Old Simon to the world is left  
In liveried poverty.  
His Master's dead,—and no one now  
Dwells in the Hall of Ivor; 30  
Men, dogs, and horses, all are dead;  
He is the sole survivor.

And he is lean and he is sick;  
His body, dwindled and awry,  
Rests upon ankles swollen and thick; 35  
His legs are thin and dry.  
One prop he has, and only one,  
His wife, an aged woman,  
Lives with him, near the waterfall,  
Upon the village Common. 40

Beside their moss-grown hut of clay,  
Not twenty paces from the door,  
A scrap of land they have, but they  
Are poorest of the poor.  
This scrap of land he from the heath 45  
Enclosed when he was stronger;  
But what to them avails the land  
Which he can till no longer?

Of, working by her Husband's side,  
Ruth does what Simon cannot do; 50  
For she, with scanty cause for pride,  
Is stouter of the two.  
And, though you with your utmost skill  
From labour could not wean them,  
'Tis little, very little—all 55  
That they can do between them.

Few months of life has he in store  
As he to you will tell,  
For still, the more he works, the more  
Do his weak ankles swell. 60

My gentle Reader, I perceive  
How patiently you've waited,  
And now I fear that you expect  
Some tale will be related.

O Reader! had you in your mind 65  
Such stores as silent thought can bring,  
O gentle Reader! you would find  
A tale in every thing.  
What more I have to say is short,  
And you must kindly take it: 70  
It is no tale; but, should you think,  
Perhaps a tale you'll make it.

One summer-day I chanced to see  
This old Man doing all he could  
To unearth the root of an old tree,  
A stump of rotten wood.  
The mattock tottered in his hand;  
So vain was his endeavour,  
That at the root of the old tree  
He might have worked for ever.

"You're overtaken, good Simon Lee,  
Give me your tool," to him I said;  
And at the word right gladly he  
Received my proffered aid.  
I struck, and with a single blow 85  
The tangled root I severed,  
At which the poor old Man so long  
And vainly had endeavoured.

The tears into his eyes were brought,  
And thanks and praises seemed to run 90  
So fast out of his heart, I thought  
They never would have done.  
—I've heard of hearts unkind, kind deeds  
With coldness still returning;  
Alas! the gratitude of men 95  
Hath oftener left me mourning.

## VII.

### WRITTEN IN GERMANY, ON ONE OF THE COLDEST DAYS OF THE CENTURY.

[Composed 1799.—Published 1800.]

The Reader must be apprised that the Stoves in  
North Germany generally have the impression  
of a galloping horse upon them, this being part  
of the Brunswick Arms.

A PLAGUE on your languages, German  
and Norse!

Let me have the song of the kettle;

And the tongs and the poker, instead of  
that horse  
That gallops away with such fury and  
force

On this dreary dull plate of black metal. 5

See that Fly,—a disconsolate creature!  
perhaps

A child of the field or the grove;  
And, sorrow for him! the dull treacherous  
heat 70

Has seduced the poor fool from his winter  
retreat,

And he creeps to the edge of my stove. 10

Alas! how he fumbles about the domains

Which this comfortless oven environ!

He cannot find out in what track he must  
crawl,

Now back to the tiles, then in search of  
the wall,

And now on the brink of the iron. 15

Stock-still there he stands like a traveller  
bemazed:

The best of his skill he has tried;  
His feelers, methinks, I can see him put  
forth 85

To the east and the west, to the south  
and the north,

But he finds neither guide-post nor guide.

His spindles sink under him, foot, leg,  
and thigh! 21

His eyesight and hearing are lost;  
Between life and death his blood freezes  
and thaws;

And his two pretty pinions of blue dusky  
gauze

Are glued to his sides by the frost. 25

No brother, no mate has he near him—  
while I

Can draw warmth from the cheek of my  
Love;

As blest and as glad, in this desolate  
gloom,

As if green summer grass were the floor  
of my room,

And woodbines were hanging above. 30

Yet, God is my witness, thou small help-  
less Thing!

Thy life I would gladly sustain

Till summer come up from the south, and  
with crowds  
Of thy brethren a march thou shouldst  
sound through the clouds,  
And back to the forests again!

35

## VIII.

## A POET'S EPITAPH.

[Composed 1739.—Published 1800.]

Art thou a Statist in the van  
Of public conflicts trained and bred?  
—First learn to love one living man;  
Then may'st thou think upon the dead.

A Lawyer art thou?—draw not nigh!  
Go, carry to some fitter place  
The keenness of that practised eye,  
The hardness of that fallow face.

5

Art thou a Man of purple cheer?  
A rosy Man, right plump to see?  
Approach; yet, Doctor, not too near,  
This grave no cushion is for thee.

10

Or art thou one of gallant pride,  
A Soldier and no man of chaff?  
Welcome!—but lay thy sword aside,  
And lean upon a peasant's staff.

15

Physician art thou?—one, all eyes,  
Philosopher!—a fingering slave,  
One that would peep and botanize  
Upon his mother's grave?

20

Wrapt closely in thy sensual fleece,  
O turn aside,—and take, I pray,  
That he below may rest in peace,  
Thy ever-dwindling soul, away!

A Moralist perchance appears;  
Led, Heaven knows how! to this poor  
sod: •

25

And he has neither eyes nor ears;  
Himself his world, and his own God;

One to whose smooth-rubbed soul can cling  
Nor form, nor feeling, great or small;  
A reasoning, self-sufficing thing,  
An intellectual All-in-all!

30

Shut close the door; press down the latch;  
Sleep in thy intellectual crust;  
Nor lose ten tickings of thy watch  
Near this unprofitable dust

35

But who is He, with modest looks,  
And clad in homely russet brown?  
He murmurs near the running brooks  
A music sweeter than their own.

40

He is retired as noontide dew,  
Or fountain in a noon-day grove;  
And you must love him, ere to you  
He will seem worthy of your love.

The outward shows of sky and earth,  
Of hill and valley, he has viewed;  
And impulses of deeper birth  
Have come to him in solitude.

45

In common things that round us lie  
Some random truths he can impart,—  
The harvest of a quiet eye  
That broods and sleeps on his own heart.

50

But he is weak; both Man and Boy,  
Hath been an idler in the land;  
Contented if he might enjoy  
The things which others understand.

55

—Come hither in thy hour of strength;  
Come, weak as is a breaking wave!  
Here stretch thy body at full length;  
Or build thy house upon this grave.

60

## IX.

## TO THE DAISY.

[Composed 1802.—Published 1807.]

BRIGHT Flower! whose home is every-  
where,

Bold in maternal Nature's care,  
And all the long year through the heir  
Of joy and sorrow;

Methinks that there abides in thee  
Some concord with humanity,  
Given to no other flower I see  
The forest thorough!

5

Is it that Man is soon deprest?  
A thoughtless Thing! who, once unblest,  
Does little on his memory rest,

11

Or on his reason,  
And Thou wouldst teach him how to  
find

A shelter under every wind,  
A hope for times that are unkind  
And every season?

15

Thou wander'st the wide world about,  
 Unchecked by pride or scrupulous doubt,  
 With friends to greet thee, or without,

Yet pleased and willing ; 20  
 Meek, yielding to the occasion's call,  
 And all things suffering from all.  
 Thy function apostolical  
 In peace fulfilling.

## X.

## MATTHEW.

[Composed 1799.—Published 1800.]

In the School of ——— is a tablet, on which  
 are inscribed, in gilt letters, the Names of the  
 several persons who have been Schoolmasters  
 there since the foundation of the School, with  
 the time at which they entered upon and quitted  
 their office. Opposite to one of those Names  
 the Author wrote the following lines.

If Nature, for a favourite child,  
 In thee hath tempered so her clay,  
 That every hour thy heart runs wild,  
 Yet never once doth go astray,

Read o'er these lines ; and then review 5  
 This tablet, that thus humbly rears  
 In such diversity of hue  
 Its history of two hundred years.

—When through this little wreck of fame,  
 Cipher and syllable ! thine eye 10  
 Has travelled down to Matthew's name,  
 Pause with no common sympathy.

And if a sleeping tear should wake,  
 Then be it neither checked nor stayed :  
 For Matthew a request I make 15  
 Which for himself he had not made.

Poor Matthew, all his frolics o'er,  
 Is silent as a standing pool ;  
 Far from the chimney's merry roar,  
 And murmur of the village school. 20

The sighs which Matthew heaved were  
 sighs

Of one tired out with fun and madness ;  
 The tears which came to Matthew's eyes  
 Were tears of light, the dew of gladness.

Yet sometimes, when the secret cup 25  
 Of still and serious thought went round,  
 It seemed as if he drank it up—  
 He felt with spirit so profound.

—Thou soul of God's best earthly mould !  
 Thou happy Soul ! and can it be 30  
 That these two words of glittering gold  
 Are all that must remain of thee ?

## XI.

## THE TWO APRIL MORNINGS.

[Composed 1799.—Published 1800.]

WE walked along, while bright and red  
 Uprose the morning sun ;  
 And Matthew stopped, he looked, and  
 said,

"The will of God be done !"

A village schoolmaster was he, 5  
 With hair of glittering grey ;  
 As blithe a man as you could see  
 On a spring holiday.

And on that morning, through the grass,  
 And by the steaming rills, 10  
 We travelled merrily, to pass  
 A day among the hills.

"Our work," said I, "was well begun,  
 Then from thy breast what thought,  
 Beneath so beautiful a sun, 15  
 So sad a sigh has brought?"

A second time did Matthew stop ;  
 And fixing still his eye  
 Upon the eastern mountain-top,  
 To me he made reply : 20

"Yon cloud with that long purple cleft  
 Brings fresh into my mind  
 A day like this which I have left  
 Full thirty years behind.

"And just above yon slope of corn 25  
 Such colours, and no other,  
 Were in the sky, that April morn,  
 Of this the very brother.

"With rod and line I sued the sport  
 Which that sweet season gave, 30  
 And, to the churchyard come, stopped  
 short

Beside my daughter's grave.

"Nine summers had she scarcely seen,  
 The pride of all the vale ;  
 And then she sang ;—she would have  
 been 35

A very nightingale.

"Six feet in earth my Emma lay ;  
And yet I loved her more,  
For so it seemed, than till that day  
I'er had loved before. 40

"And, turning from her grave, I met,  
Beside the churchyard yew,  
A blooming Girl, whose hair was wet  
With points of morning dew.

"A basket on her head she bare ; 45  
Her brow was smooth and white :  
To see a child so very fair,  
It was a pure delight !

"No fountain from its rocky cave  
E'er tripped with foot so free ; 50  
She seemed as happy as a wave  
That dances on the sea.

"There came from me a sigh of pain  
Which I could ill confine ;  
I looked at her, and looked again : 55  
And did not wish her mine !"

Matthew is in his grave, yet now,  
Methinks, I see him stand,  
As at that moment, with a bough  
Of wilding in his hand. 60

## XII.

## THE FOUNTAIN.

## A CONVERSATION.

[Composed 1799.—Published 1800.]

We talked with open heart, and tongue  
Affectionate and true,  
A pair of friends, though I was young,  
And Matthew seventy-two.

We lay beneath a spreading oak, 5  
Beside a mossy seat ;  
And from the turf a fountain broke,  
And gurgled at our feet.

"Now, Matthew !" said I, "let us match  
This water's pleasant tune 10  
With some old border-song, or catch  
That suits a summer's noon ;

"Or of the church-clock and the chimes  
Sing here beneath the shade,  
That half-mad thing of witty rhymes 15  
Which you last April made !"

In silence Matthew lay, and eyed  
The spring beneath the tree ;  
And thus the dear old Man replied,  
The grey-haired man of glee : 20

"No check, no stay, this Streamlet fears ;  
How merrily it goes !  
'Twill murmur on a thousand years,  
And flow as now it flows.

"And here, on this delightful day, 25  
I cannot choose but think  
How oft, a vigorous man, I lay  
Beside this fountain's brink.

"My eyes are dim with childish tears,  
My heart is idly stirred, 30  
For the same sound is in my ears  
Which in those days I heard.

"Thus fares it still in our decay :  
And yet the wiser mind  
Mourns less for what age takes away 35  
Than what it leaves behind.

"The blackbird amid leafy trees,  
The lark above the hill,  
Let loose their carols when they please,  
Are quiet when they will. 40

"With Nature never do they wage  
A foolish strife ; they see  
A happy youth, and their old age  
Is beautiful and free :

"But we are pressed by heavy laws ; 45  
And often, glad no more,  
We wear a face of joy, because  
We have been glad of yore.

"If there be one who need bemoan  
His kindred laid in earth, 50  
The household hearts that were his own ;  
It is the man of mirth.

"My days, my Friend, are almost gone,  
My life has been approved,  
And many love me ! but by none 55  
Am I enough beloved."

"Now both himself and me he wrongs,  
The man who thus complains !  
I live and sing my idle songs  
Upon these happy plains ; 60

"And, Matthew, for thy children dead  
I'll be a son to thee!"  
At this he grasped my hand, and said,  
"Alas! that cannot be."

We rose up from the fountain-side; 65  
And down the smooth descent  
Of the green sheep-track did we glide;  
And through the wood we went;  
And, ere we came to Leonard's rock,  
He sang those witty rhymes 70  
About the crazy old church-clock,  
And the bewildered chimcs.

## XIII.

## PERSONAL TALK.

[Composed ?.—Published 1807.]

## I.

I AM not One who much or oft delight  
To season my fireside with personal  
talk,—

Of friends, who live within an easy walk,  
Or neighbours, daily, weekly, in my  
sight:

And, for my chance-acquaintance, ladies  
bright, 5

Sons, mothers, maidens withering on the  
stalk,

These all wear out of me, like Forms with  
chalk

Painted on rich men's floors, for one feast-  
night.

Better than such discourse doth silence  
long,

Long, barren silence, square with my  
desire; 10

To sit without emotion, hope, or aim,  
In the loved presence of my cottage-fire,  
And listen to the flapping of the flame,  
Or kettle whispering its faint under-  
song.

## II.

"Yet life," you say, "is life; we have  
seen and see, 15

And with a living pleasure we describe;  
And fits of sprightly malice do but

bribe  
The languid mind into activity.

Sound sense, and love itself, and mirth  
and glee

Are fostered by the comment and the  
gibe." 20

Even be it so: yet still among your  
tribe,

Our daily world's true Worldlings, rank  
not me!

Children are blest, and powerful; their  
world lies

More justly balanced; partly at their feet,  
And part far from them:—sweetest  
melodies 25

Are those that are by distance made  
more sweet;

Whose mind is but the mind of his own  
eyes,

He is a Slave; the meanest we can meet!

## III.

Wings have we,—and as far as we can  
go

We may find pleasure: wilderness and  
wood, 30

Blank ocean and mere sky, support that  
mood

Which with the lofty sanctifies the low.  
Dreams, books, are each a world; and

books, we know,  
Are a substantial world, both pure and  
good:

Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh  
and blood, 35

Our pastime and our happiness will  
grow.

There find I personal themes, a plenteous  
store,

Matter wherein right voluble I am,  
To which I listen with a ready ear;

Two shall be named, pre-eminently dear,—  
The gentle Lady married to the Moor; 41

And heavenly Una with her milk-white  
Lamb.

## IV.

Nor can I not believe but that hereby  
Great gains are mine; for thus I live

remote  
From evil-speaking; rancour, never  
sought, 45

Comes to me not; malignant truth, or  
lie.

Hence have I genial seasons, hence have I  
Smooth passions, smooth discourse, and  
joyous thought:

And thus from day to day my little  
boat

Rocks in its harbour, lodging peaceably.  
Blessings be with them—and eternal  
praise,

Who gave us nobler loves, and nobler  
cares—

The Poets, who on earth have made us  
heirs

Of truth and pure delight by heavenly  
lays!

Oh! might my name be numbered among  
theirs,

Then gladly would I end my mortal  
days.

## XIV.

ILLUSTRATED BOOKS AND  
NEWSPAPERS.

[Composed 1846.—Published 1850.]

Discourse was deemed Man's noblest  
attribute,

And written words the glory of his  
hand;

Then followed Printing with enlarged  
command

For thought—dominion vast and absolute  
For spreading truth, and making love  
expand.

Now prose and verse sunk into disrepute  
Must lacquey a dumb Art that best can  
suit

The taste of this once-intellectual Land.  
A backward movement surely have we  
here,

From manhood—back to childhood; for  
the age—

Back towards caverned life's first rude  
career.

Avaunt this vile abuse of pictured page!  
Must eyes be all in all, the tongue and  
ear

Nothing? Heaven keep us from a lower  
stage!

## XV.

## TO THE SPADE OF A FRIEND.

(AN AGRICULTURIST.)

Composed while we were labouring together in  
his pleasure-ground.

[Composed (probably) 1808.—Published 1807.]

SPADE! with which Wilkinson hath tilled  
his lands,

And shaped these pleasant walks by  
Emont's side,

Thou art a tool of honour in my hands;  
I press thee, through the yielding soil,

with pride.

Rare master has it been thy lot to know;  
Long hast Thou served a man to reason true;

Whose life combines the best of high and  
low,

The labouring many and the resting few;

Health, meekness, ardour, quietness secure,  
And industry of body and of mind;

And elegant enjoyments, that are pure  
As nature is;—too pure to be refined.

Here often hast Thou heard the Poet sing  
In concord with his river murmuring by;  
Or in some silent field, while timid spring  
Is yet uncheered by other minstrelsy.

Who shall inherit Thee when death has  
laid

Low in the darksome cell thine own dear  
lord?

That man will have a trophy, humble  
Spade!

A trophy nobler than a conqueror's sword.

If he be one that feels, with skill to part  
False praise from true, or, greater from  
the less,

Thee will he welcome to his hand and  
heart,

Thou monument of peaceful happiness!

He will not dread with Thee a toilsome  
day—

Thee his loved servant, his inspiring  
mate!

And, when Thou art past service, worn  
away,

No dull oblivious nook shall hide thy fate.

His thrift thy uselessness will never scorn;  
 An *heir-loom* in his cottage wilt Thou  
 be:— 30  
 High will he hang thee up, well pleased  
 to adorn  
 His rustic chimney with the last of  
 Thee!

## XVI.

## A NIGHT THOUGHT.

[Composed ?.—Published 1837 (*The Tribute*:  
*edited by Lord Northampton*); vol. of 1842.]

Lo! where the Moon along the sky  
 Sails with her happy destiny;  
 Oft is she hid from mortal eye  
 Or dimly seen,  
 But when the clouds asunder fly 5  
 How bright her mien!  
 Far different we—a froward race,  
 Thousands though rich in Fortune's grace  
 With cherished sullenness of pace  
 Their way pursue, 10  
 Ingrates who wear a smileless face  
 The whole year through.  
 If kindred humours e'er would make  
 My spirit droop for drooping's sake,  
 From Fancy following in thy wake, 15  
 Bright ship of heaven!  
 A counter impulse let me take  
 And be forgiven.

## XVII.

## INCIDENT

## CHARACTERISTIC OF A FAVOURITE DOG.

[Composed 1805.—Published 1807.]

On his morning rounds the Master  
 Goes to learn how all things fare;  
 Searches pasture after pasture,  
 Sheep and cattle eyes with care;  
 And, for silence or for talk, 5  
 He hath comrades in his walk;  
 Four dogs, each pair of different breed,  
 Distinguished two for scent, and two for  
 speed.  
 See a hare before him started!  
 —Off they fly in earnest chase; 10  
 Every dog is eager-hearted,  
 All the four are in the race:

And the hare whom they pursue,  
 Knows from instinct what to do;  
 Her hope is near: no turn she makes; 15  
 But, like an arrow, to the river takes.

Deep the river was, and crusted  
 Thinly by a one night's frost;  
 But the nimble Hare hath trusted  
 To the ice, and safely crost; 20  
 She hath crost, and without heed  
 All are following at full speed,  
 When, lo! the ice, so thinly spread,  
 Breaks—and the greyhound, DART, is  
 overhead!

Better fate have PRINCE and SWALLOW—  
 See them cleaving to the sport! 26  
 MUSIC has no heart to follow,  
 Little MUSIC, she stops short.  
 She hath neither wish nor heart,  
 Hers is now another part: 30  
 A loving creature she, and brave!  
 And fondly strives her struggling friend  
 to save.

From the brink her paws she stretches,  
 Very hands as you would say!  
 And afflicting moans she fetches, 35  
 As he breaks the ice away.  
 For herself she hath no fears,—  
 Him alone she sees and hears,—  
 Makes efforts with complainings; nor  
 gives o'er  
 Until her fellow sinks to re-appear no  
 more. 40

## XVIII.

## TRIBUTE

## TO THE MEMORY OF THE SAME DOG.

[Composed 1805.—Published 1807.]

LIE here, without a record of thy worth,  
 Beneath a covering of the common earth!  
 It is not from unwillingness to praise,  
 Or want of love, that here no Stone we  
 raise;  
 More thou deserv'st; but *this* man gives  
 to man, 5  
 Brother to brother, *this* is all we can.  
 Yet they to whom thy virtues made thee  
 dear  
 Shall find thee through all changes of the  
 year:

This Oak points out thy grave; the silent  
tree  
Will gladly stand a monument of thee. 10

We grieved for thee, and wished thy  
end were past;  
And willingly have laid thee here at last:  
For thou hadst lived till every thing that  
cheers

In thee had yielded to the weight of years;  
Extreme old age had wasted thee away, 15  
And left thee but a glimmering of the day;  
Thy ears were deaf, and feeble were thy  
knees,—

I saw thee stagger in the summer breeze,  
Too weak to stand against its sportive  
breath,

And ready for the gentlest stroke of  
death. 20

It came, and we were glad; yet tears were  
shed;

Both man and woman wept when thou  
wert dead;

Not only for a thousand thoughts that  
were,

Old household thoughts, in which thou  
hadst thy share;

But for some precious boons vouchsafed  
to thee, 25

Found scarcely anywhere in like degree!  
For love, that comes wherever life and  
sense

Are given by God, in thee was most  
intense;

A chain of heart, a feeling of the mind,  
A tender sympathy, which did thee bind  
Not only to us Men, but to thy Kind: 31

Yea, for thy fellow-brutes in thee we saw  
A soul of love, love's intellectual law:—

Hence, if we wept, it was not done in  
shame?

Our tears from passion and from reason  
came, 35

And, therefore, shalt thou be an honoured  
name!

## XIX.

## FIDELITY.

[Composed 1805.—Published 1807.]

A BARKING sound the Shepherd hears,  
A cry as of a dog or fox;

He halts—and searches with his eyes  
Among the scattered rocks:  
And now at distance can discern 5  
A stirring in a brake of fern;  
And instantly a dog is seen,  
Glancing through that covert green.

The Dog is not of mountain breed;  
Its motions, too, are wild and shy; 10  
With something, as the Shepherd thinks,  
Unusual in its cry:  
Nor is there any one in sight  
All round, in hollow or on height;  
Nor shout, nor whistle strikes his ear; 15  
What is the creature doing here?

It was a cove, a huge recess,  
That keeps, till June, December's snow;  
A lofty precipice in front,  
A silent tarn<sup>1</sup> below! 20  
Far in the bosom of Helvellyn,  
Remote from public road or dwelling,  
Pathway, or cultivated land;  
From trace of human foot or hand.

There sometimes doth a leaping fish 25  
Send through the tarn a lonely cheer;  
The crags repeat the raven's croak,  
In symphony austere;  
Thither the rainbow comes—the cloud—  
And mists that spread the flying shroud;  
And sunbeams; and the sounding blast,  
That, if it could, would hurry past; 32  
But that enormous barrier holds it fast.

Not free from boding thoughts, a while  
The Shepherd stood; then makes his way  
O'er rocks and stones, following the Dog  
As quickly as he may;  
Nor far had gone before he found  
A human skeleton on the ground;  
The appalled Discoverer with a sigh 40  
Looks round, to learn the history.

From those abrupt and perilous rocks  
The Man had fallen, that place of fear!  
At length upon the Shepherd's mind  
It breaks, and all is clear: 45  
He instantly recalled the name,  
And who he was, and whence he came;  
Remembered, too, the very day  
On which the Traveller passed this way.

<sup>1</sup> Tarn is a *small* Mere or Lake, mostly high  
up in the mountains.

But hear a wonder, for whose sake 50  
This lamentable tale I tell!  
A lasting monument of words  
This wonder merits well.  
The Dog, which still was hovering nigh,  
Repeating the same timid cry, 55  
This Dog, had been through three months'  
space  
A dweller in that savage place.

Yes, proof was plain that, since the day  
When this ill-fated Traveller died,  
The Dog had watched about the spot, 60  
Or by his master's side:  
How nourished here through such long  
time

He knows, who gave that love sublime;  
And gave that strength of feeling, great  
Above all human estimate! 65

## XX.

## ODE TO DUTY.

[Composed 1805.—Published 1807.]

"Jam non consilio bonus, sed more eò perductus,  
ut non tantum rectè facere possim, sed nisi  
rectè facere non possim."

STERN Daughter of the Voice of God!  
O Duty! if that name thou love  
Who art a light to guide, a rod  
To check the erring, and reprove;  
Thou, who art victory and law 5  
When empty terrors overawe;  
From vain temptations dost set free;  
And, calm'st the weary strife of frail  
humanity! /

There are who ask not if thine eye  
Be on them; who, in love and truth, 10  
Where no misgiving is, rely  
Upon the genial sense of youth:  
Glad Hearts! without reproach or blot;  
Who do thy work, and know it not:  
Oh! if through confidence misplaced 15  
They fail, thy saving arms, dread Power!  
around them cast. /

Serene will be our days and bright,  
And happy will our nature be,  
When love is an unerring light,  
And joy its own security. 20

And they a blissful course may hold  
Even now, who, not unwisely bold,  
Live in the spirit of this creed;  
Yet seek thy firm support, according to  
their need. /

I, loving freedom, and untried; 25  
No sport of every random gust,  
Yet being to myself a guide,  
Too blindly have reposed my trust:  
And oft, when in my heart was heard  
Thy timely mandate, I deferred 30  
The task, in smoother walks to stray;  
But thee I now would serve more strictly,  
if I may. /

Through no disturbance of my soul,  
Or strong compunction in me wrought,  
I supplicate for thy control; 35  
But in the quietness of thought:  
Me this unchartered freedom tires;  
I feel the weight of chance-desires:  
My hopes no more must change their  
name,  
I long for a repose that ever is the  
same. 40

[Yet not the less would I throughout  
Still act according to the voice  
Of my own wish; and feel past doubt  
That my submissiveness was choice:  
Not seeking in the school of pride  
For "precepts over dignified,"  
Denial and restraint I prize  
No farther than they breed a second Will  
more wise<sup>1</sup>.] /

Stern Lawgiver! yet thou dost wear  
The Godhead's most benignant grace;  
Nor know we anything so fair  
As is the smile upon thy face:  
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds 45  
And fragrance in thy footing treads;  
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong;  
And the most ancient heavens, through  
Thee, are fresh and strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power!  
I call thee: I myself commend 50  
Unto thy guidance from this hour;  
Oh, let my weakness have an end!

<sup>1</sup> In ed. 1807 only.—Ed.

Give unto me, made lowly wise,  
The spirit of self-sacrifice;  
The confidence of reason give; 55  
And in the light of truth thy Bondman  
let me live!

## XXI.

CHARACTER OF THE HAPPY  
WARRIOR.

[Composed December 1865 or January 1866.—  
Published 1867.]

Who is the happy Warrior? Who is he  
That every man in arms should wish  
to be?

—It is the generous Spirit, who, when  
brought

Among the tasks of real life, hath  
wrought

Upon the plan that pleased his boyish  
thought: 5

Whose high endeavours are an inward  
light

That makes the path before him always  
bright:

Who, with a natural instinct to discern  
What knowledge can perform, is diligent  
to learn;

Abides by this resolve, and stops not  
there, 10

But makes his moral being his prime  
care;

Who, doomed to go in company with  
Pain,

And Fear, and Bloodshed, miserable  
train!

Turns his necessity to glorious gain;  
In face of these doth exercise a power 15

Which is our human nature's highest  
dower;

Controls them, and subdues, transmutes,  
bereaves

Of their bad influence, and their good  
receives:

By objects, which might force the soul to  
abate

Her feeling, rendered more compas-  
sionate; 20

Is placable—because occasions rise  
So often that demand such sacrifice;

More skilful in self-knowledge, even  
more pure,

As tempted more; more able to endure,  
As more exposed to suffering and dis-  
tress; 25

Thence, also, more alive to tenderness.  
—'Tis he whose law is reason; who  
depends

Upon that law as on the best of friends;  
Whence, in a state where men are tempted  
still

To evil for a guard against worse ill, 30  
And what in quality or act is best

Doth seldom on a right foundation rest,  
He labours good on good to fix, and owes

To virtue every triumph that he knows:  
—Who, if he rise to station of command,

Rises by open means; and there will  
stand 36

On honourable terms, or else retire,  
And in himself possess his own desire;

Who comprehends his trust, and to the  
same

Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim;  
And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in  
wait 41

For wealth, or honours, or for worldly  
state;

Whom they must follow; on whose head  
must fall,

Like showers of manna, if they come  
at all:

Whose powers shed round him in the  
common strife, 45

Or mild concerns of ordinary life,  
A constant influence, a peculiar grace;

But who, if he be called upon to face  
Some awful moment to which Heaven

has joined  
Great issues, good or bad for human  
kind, 50

Is happy as a Lover; and attired  
With sudden brightness, like a Man

inspired;

And, through the heat of conflict, keeps  
the law

In calmness made, and sees what he  
foresaw;

Or if an unexpected call succeed, 55  
Come when it will, is equal to the need:

—He who, though thus endued as with a  
sense

And faculty for storm and turbulence,

Is yet a Soul whose master-bias leans  
To homefelt pleasures and to gentle  
scenes; 60

Sweet images! which, wheresoe'er he be,  
Are at his heart; and such fidelity  
It is his darling passion to approve;  
More brave for this, that he hath much to  
love:—

'Tis, finally, the Man, who, lifted high, 65  
Conspicuous object in a Nation's eye,  
Or left unthought-of in obscurity,—  
Who, with a toward or untoward lot,  
Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or not—  
Plays, in the many games of life, that one  
Where what he most doth value must be  
won: 71

Whom neither shape of danger can  
dismay,

Nor thought of tender happiness betray;  
Who, not content that former worth  
stand fast,

Looks forward, persevering to the last, 75  
From well to better, daily self-surpass:  
Who, whether praise of him must walk  
the earth

For ever, and to noble deeds give birth,  
Or he must fall, to sleep without his fame,  
And leave a dead unprofitable name— 80  
Finds comfort in himself and in his cause;  
And, while the mortal mist is gathering,  
draws

His breath in confidence of Heaven's  
applause:

This is the happy Warrior; this is He 84  
That every Man in arms should wish to be.

## XXII.

### THE FORCE OF PRAYER<sup>1</sup>;

OR,

### THE FOUNDING OF BOLTON PRIORY.

#### A TRADITION.

[Composed 1807.—Published 1815 (4to, along with  
*The White Doe of Rylstone*); ed. 1815.]

“What is good for a bootless bent?”

With these dark words begins my Tale;  
And their meaning is, whence can comfort  
spring

When Prayer is of no avail?

“What is good for a bootless bent?” 5  
The Falconer to the Lady said;  
And she made answer “ENDLESS SORROW!”  
For she knew that her Son was dead.

She knew it by the Falconer's words, 9  
And from the look of the Falconer's eye;  
And from the love which was in her soul  
For her youthful Romilly.

—Young Romilly through Barden woods  
Is ranging high and low;  
And holds a greyhound in a leash, 15  
To let slip upon buck or doe.

The pair have reached that fearful chasm,  
How tempting to bestride!  
For lordly Wharf is there pent in  
With rocks on either side. 20

The striding-place is called THE STRID,  
A name which it took of yore:  
A thousand years hath it borne that  
name,  
And shall a thousand more.

And hither is young Romilly come, 25  
And what may now forbid  
That he, perhaps for the hundredth time,  
Shall bound across THE STRID?

He sprang in glee,—for what cared he  
That the river was strong, and the rocks  
were steep?— 30  
But the greyhound in the leash hung  
back,  
And checked him in his leap.

The Boy is in the arms of Wharf,  
And strangled by a merciless force;  
For never more was young Romilly seen  
Till he rose a lifeless corse. 36

Now there is stillness in the vale,  
And long, unspeaking, sorrow:  
Wharf shall be to pitying hearts  
A name more sad than Yarrow. 40

If for a Lover the Lady wept,  
A solace she might borrow  
From death, and from the passion of  
death:—

Old Wharf might heal her sorrow.

<sup>1</sup> See “The White Doe of Rylstone.”

She weeps not for the wedding-day 45  
Which was to be to-morrow :  
Her hope was a further-looking hope,  
And hers is a mother's sorrow.

He was a tree that stood alone,  
And proudly did its branches wave ; 50  
And the root of this delightful tree  
Was in her husband's grave !

Long, long in darkness did she sit,  
And her first words were, "Let there be  
In Bolton, on the field of Wharf, 55  
A stately Priory !"

The stately Priory was reared ;  
And Wharf, as he moved along,  
To matins joined a mournful voice,  
Nor failed at even-song. 60

And the Lady prayed in heaviness  
That looked not for relief !  
But slowly did her succour come,  
And a patience to her grief.

Oh ! there is never sorrow of heart 65  
That shall lack a timely end,  
If but to God we turn, and ask  
Of Him to be our friend !

## XXIII.

## A FACT, AND AN IMAGINATION ;

OR,

## CANUTE AND ALFRED, ON THE SEA-SHORE.

[Composed 1816.—Published 1820.]

THE Danish Conqueror, on his royal  
chair,

Mustering a face of haughty sovereignty,  
To aid a covert purpose, cried—"O ye  
Approaching Waters of the deep, that  
share

With this green isle my fortunes, come  
not where 5

Your Master's throne is set."—Deaf was  
the Sea ;

Her waves rolled on, respecting his decree  
Less than they heed a breath of wanton  
air.

—Then Canute, rising from the invaded  
throne,

Said to his servile Courtiers,—“ Poor the  
reach, 10

The undisguised extent, of mortal sway !  
He only is a King, and he alone  
Deserves the name (this truth the billows  
preach)

Whose everlasting laws, sea, earth, and  
heaven obey.”

This just reproof the prosperous Dane  
Drew from the influx of the main, 16  
For some whose rugged northern mouths  
would strain

At oriental flattery ;  
And Canute (fact more worthy to be  
known)

From that time forth did for his brows  
disown 20

The ostentatious symbol of a crown ;  
Esteeming earthly royalty  
Contemptible as vain.

Now hear what one of elder days,  
Rich theme of England's fondest praise, 25  
Her darling Alfred, *might* have spoken ;  
To cheer the remnant of his host  
When he was driven from coast to coast,  
Distressed and harassed, but with mind  
unbroken :

“ My faithful followers, lo ! the tide is  
spent 30

That rose, and steadily advanced to fill  
The shores and channels, working Na-  
ture's will

Among the mazy streams that backward  
went,

And in the sluggish pools where ships are  
pent :

And now, his task performed, the flood  
stands still, 35

At the green base of many an inland  
hill,

In placid beauty and sublime content !  
Such the repose that sage and hero find ;

Such measured rest the sedulous and good  
Of humbler name ; whose souls do, like

the flood 40  
Of Ocean, press right on ; or gently wind,  
Neither to be diverted nor withstood

Until they reach the bounds by Heaven  
assigned.”

## XXIV.

[Composed 1816.—Published 1820.]

*"A LITTLE onward lend thy guiding hand  
To these dark steps, a little further on!"*

—What trick of memory to my voice hath brought

This mournful iteration? For though Time,

The Conqueror, crowns the Conquered,  
on this brow 5

Planting his favourite silver diadem,  
Nor he, nor minister of his—intent

To run before him, hath enrolled me yet,  
Though not unmenaced, among those who lean

Upon a living staff, with borrowed sight.  
—O my own Dora, my beloved child! 11

Should that day come—but hark! the birds salute

The cheerful dawn, brightening for me the east;

For me, thy natural leader, once again  
Impatient to conduct thee, not as erst 15

A tottering infant, with compliant stoop  
From flower to flower supported; but to curb

Thy nymph-like step swift-bounding o'er the lawn,

Along the loose rocks, or the slippery verge

Of foaming torrents.—From thy orisons  
Come forth; and, while the morning air is yet 21

Transparent as the soul of innocent youth,  
Let me, thy happy guide, now point thy way,

And now precede thee, winding to and fro,  
Till we by perseverance gain the top 25

Of some smooth ridge, whose brink precipitous

Kindles intense desire for powers withheld  
From this corporeal frame; whereon who stands

Is seized with strong incitement to push forth

His arms, as swimmers use, and plunge—  
dread thought, 30

For pastime plunge—into the "abrupt  
abyss,"

Where ravens spread their plumy vans,  
at ease!

And yet more gladly thee would I  
conduct

Through woods and spacious forests,—to behold

There how the Original of human art, 35  
Heaven-prompted Nature, measures and erects

Her temples, fearless for the stately work,  
Though waves, to every breeze, its high-

arched roof,  
And storms the pillars rock. But we

such schools  
Of reverential awe will chiefly seek 40

In the still summer noon, while beams of light,

Reposing here, and in the aisles beyond  
Traceably gliding through the dusk, recall

To mind the living presences of nuns;  
A gentle, pensive, white-robed sisterhood,

Whose saintly radiance mitigates the gloom 46

Of those terrestrial fabrics, where they serve,

To Christ, the Sun of righteousness,  
espoused.

Now also shall the page of classic lore,  
To these glad eyes from bondage freed,

again 50

Lie open; and the book of Holy Writ,  
Again unfolded, passage clear shall yield

To heights more glorious still, and into shades

More awful, where, advancing hand in hand,

We may be taught, O Darling of my care!  
To calm the affections, elevate the soul,

And consecrate our lives to truth and love.

## XXV.

## ODE TO LYCORIS.

MAY, 1817.

[Composed May, 1817.—Published 1820.]

## I.

AN age hath been when Earth was proud  
Of lustre too intense

To be sustained; and Mortals bowed  
The front in self-defence.

Who *then*, if Dian's crescent gleamed, 5  
 Or Cupid's sparkling arrow streamed  
 While on the wing the Urchin played,  
 Could fearlessly approach the shade?  
 —Enough for one soft vernal day,  
 If I, a bard of ebbing time, 10  
 And nurtured in a fickle clime,  
 May haunt this hornèd bay;  
 Whose amorous water multiplies  
 The fitting halcyon's vivid dyes; 14  
 And smooths her liquid breast—to show  
 These swan-like specks of mountain snow,  
 White as the pair that slid along the  
 plains  
 Of heaven, when Venus held the reins!

## II.

In youth we love the darksome lawn  
 Brushed by the owlet's wing; 20  
 Then, Twilight is preferred to Dawn,  
 And Autumn to the Spring.  
 Sad fancies do we then affect,  
 In luxury of disrespect  
 To our own prodigal excess 25  
 Of too familiar happiness.  
 Lycoris (if such name befit  
 Thee, thee my life's celestial sign!)  
 When Nature marks the year's decline,  
 Be ours to welcome it; 30  
 Pleased with the harvest hope that runs  
 Before the path of milder suns;  
 Pleased while the sylvan world displays  
 Its ripeness to the feeding gaze;  
 Pleased when the sullen winds resound  
 the knell 35  
 Of the resplendent miracle.

## III.

But something whispers to my heart  
 That, as we downward tend,  
 Lycoris! life requires an *art*  
 To which our souls must bend; 40  
 A skill—to balance and supply;  
 And, ere the flowing fount be dry,  
 As soon it must, a sense to sip,  
 Or drink, with no fastidious lip.  
 Then welcome, above all, the Guest 45  
 Whose smiles, diffused o'er land and sea,  
 Seem to recall the Deity  
 Of youth into the breast:

May pensive Autumn ne'er present  
 A claim to her disparagement! 50  
 While blossoms and the budding spray  
 Inspire us in our own decay;  
 Still, as we nearer draw to life's dark  
 goal,  
 Be hopeful Spring the favourite of the  
 Soul!

## XXVI.

## TO THE SAME.

[Composed 1817.—Published 1820.]

ENOUGH of climbing toil!—Ambition  
 treads  
 Here, as 'mid busier scenes, ground steep  
 and rough,  
 Or slipperly even to peril! and each step,  
 As we for most uncertain recompense  
 Mount toward the empire of the fickle  
 clouds, 5  
 Each weary step, dwarfing the world  
 below,  
 Induces, for its old familiar sights,  
 Unacceptable feelings of contempt,  
 With wonder mixed—that Man could  
 e'er be tied,  
 In anxious bondage, to such nice array 10  
 And formal fellowship of petty things!  
 —Oh! 'tis the heart that magnifies this  
 life,  
 Making a truth and beauty of her own;  
 And moss-grown alleys, circumscribing  
 shades, 14  
 And gurgling rills, assist her in the work  
 More efficaciously than realms outspread,  
 As in a map, before the adventurer's  
 gaze—  
 Ocean and Earth contending for regard.  
 The umbrageous woods are left—how  
 far beneath!  
 But lo! where darkness seems to guard  
 the mouth 20  
 Of yon wild cave, whose jagged brows are  
 fringed  
 With flaccid threads of ivy, in the still  
 And sultry air, depending motionless.  
 Yet cool the space within, and not un-  
 cheered  
 (As whoso enters shall ere long perceive)  
 By stealthy influx of the timid day 26

Mingling with night, such twilight to  
compose

As Numa loved; when, in the Egerian  
grot,

From the sage Nymph appearing at his  
wish

He gained whate'er a regal mind might  
ask,

Or need, of counsel breathed through lips  
divine.

Long as the heat shall rage, let that  
dim cave

Protect us, there deciphering as we may  
Diluvian records; or the sighs of Earth  
Interpreting; or counting for old Time 35  
His minutes, by reiterated drops,  
Audible tears, from some invisible source  
That deepens upon fancy—more and more  
Drawn toward the centre whence those  
sighs creep forth

To awe the lightness of humanity. 40  
Or, shutting up thyself within thyself,  
There let me see thee sink into a mood  
Of gentler thought, protracted till thine eye  
Be calm as water when the winds are gone,  
And no one can tell whither. Dearest  
Friend! 45

We two<sup>1</sup> have known such happy hours  
together

That, were power granted to replace  
them (fetched

From out the pensive shadows where they  
lie)

In the first warmth of their original sun-  
shine,

Loth should I be to use it: passing sweet  
Are the domains of tender memory! 51

### XXVII.

SEPTEMBER, 1819.

[Composed September, 1819.—Published 1820.]

THE sylvan slopes with corn-clad fields  
Are hung, as if with golden shields,  
Bright trophies of the sun!

Like a fair sister of the sky,  
Unruffled doth the blue lake lie, 5  
The mountains looking on.

<sup>1</sup> "We two": edd. 1820–1843; "we too": edd. 1845, 1849–50.—Ed.

And, sooth to say, yon vocal grove,  
Albeit uninspired by love,  
By love untaught to ring,  
May well afford to mortal ear 10  
An impulse more profoundly dear  
Than music of the Spring.

For *that* from turbulence and heat  
Proceeds, from some uneasy seat  
In nature's struggling frame, 15  
Some region of impatient life:  
And jealousy, and quivering strife,  
Therein a portion claim.

This, this is holy;—while I hear  
These vespers of another year, 20  
This hymn of thanks and praise,  
My spirit seems to mount above  
The anxieties of human love,  
And earth's precarious days.

But list!—though winter storms be nigh,  
Unchecked is that soft harmony: 26  
There lives Who can provide  
For all His creatures; and in Him,  
Even like the radiant Seraphim,  
These choristers confide.

### XXVIII.

UPON THE SAME OCCASION

[Composed September, 1819.—Published 1820.]

DEPARTING summer hath assumed  
An aspect tenderly illumed,  
The gentlest look of spring;  
That calls from yonder leafy shade  
Unfaded, yet prepared to fade, 5  
A timely carolling.

No faint and hesitating trill,  
Such tribute as to winter dull  
The lonely redbreast pays!  
Clear, loud, and lively is the din, 10  
From social warblers gathering in  
Their harvest of sweet lays.

Nor doth the example fail to cheer  
Me, conscious that my leaf is sere,  
And yellow on the bough:— 15  
Fall, rosy garlands, from my head!  
Ye myrtle wreaths, your fragrance shed  
Around a younger brow!

Yet will I temperately rejoice;  
Wide is the range, and free the choice 20  
Of undiscordant themes;  
Which, haply, kindred souls may prize  
Not less than vernal ecstasies,  
And passion's feverish dreams.

For deathless powers to verse belong, 25  
And they like Demi-gods are strong  
On whom the Muses smile;  
But some their function have disclaimed.  
Best pleased with what is aptliest framed  
To enervate and defile. 30

Not such the initiatory strains  
Committed to the silent pains  
In Britain's earliest dawn:  
Trembled the groves, the stars grew pale,  
While all-too-daringly the veil 35  
Of nature was withdrawn!

Nor such the spirit-stirring note  
When the live chords Alcæus smote,  
Inflamed by sense of wrong;  
Woe! woe to Tyrants! from the lyre 40  
Broke threateningly, in sparkles dire  
Of fierce vindictive song.

And not unhallowed was the page  
By winged Love inscribed, to assuage  
The pangs of vain pursuit; 45  
Love listening while the Lesbian Maid  
With finest touch of passion swayed  
Her own Æolian lute.

O ye, who patiently explore  
The wreck of Herculean lore, 50  
What rapture! could ye seize  
Some Theban fragment, or unroll  
One precious, tender-hearted, scroll  
Of pure Simonides.

That were, indeed, a genuine birth  
Of poesy; a bursting forth  
Of genius from the dust:  
What Horace gloried to behold,  
What Maro loved, shall we enfold? 60  
Can haughty Time be just!

## XXIX.

## MEMORY.

[Composed 1823.—Published 1827.]

A PEN—to register; a key—  
That winds through secret wards;

Are well assigned to Memory  
By allegoric Bards.

As aptly, also, might be given 5  
A Pencil to her hand;  
That, softening objects, sometimes even  
Outstrips the heart's demand;

That smoothes foregone distress, the lines  
Of lingering care subdues, 10  
Long-vanished happiness refines,  
And clothes in brighter hues;

Yet, like a tool of Fancy, works  
Those Spectres to dilate  
That startle Conscience, as she lurks 15  
Within her lonely seat.

O! that our lives, which flee so fast,  
In purity were such,  
That not an image of the past  
Should fear that pencil's touch! 20

Retirement then might hourly look  
Upon a soothing scene,  
Age steal to his allotted nook  
Contented and serene;

With heart as calm as lakes that sleep, 25  
In frosty moonlight glistening;  
Or mountain rivers, where they creep  
Along a channel smooth and deep,  
To their own far-off murmurs listening.

## XXX.

[Composed 1829.—Published 1835.]

THIS Lawn, a carpet all alive  
With shadows flung from leaves—to strive  
In dance, amid a press  
Of sunshine, an apt emblem yields  
Of Worldlings revelling in the fields 5  
Of strenuous idleness;

Less quick the stir when tide and breeze  
Encounter, and to narrow seas  
Forbidden a moment's rest;  
The medley less when boreal Lights 10  
Glance to and fro, like æry Sprites  
To feats of arms address!

Yet, spite of all this eager strife,  
This ceaseless play, the genuine life  
That serves the steadfast hours, 15  
Is in the grass beneath, that grows  
Unheeded, and the mute repose  
Of sweetly-breathing flowers.

## XXXI.

## HUMANITY.

[Composed 1822.—Published 1885.]

The Rocking-stones, alluded to in the beginning of the following verses, are supposed to have been used, by our British ancestors, both for judicial and religious purposes. Such stones are not uncommonly found, at this day, both in Great Britain and in Ireland.

WHAT though the Accused, upon his own appeal

To righteous Gods when man has ceased to feel,

Or at a doubting Judge's stern command,  
Before the STONE OF POWER no longer stand—

To take his sentence from the balanced Block,

As, at his touch, it rocks, or seems to rock;

Though, in the depths of sunless groves,  
no more

The Druid-priest the hallowed Oak adore;  
Yet, for the Initiate, rocks and whispering trees

Do still perform mysterious offices !  
And functions dwell in beast and bird that sway

The reasoning mind, or with the fancy play,

Inviting, at all seasons, ears and eyes

To watch for undelusive auguries:—

Not uninspired appear their simplest ways;

Their voices mount symbolical of praise—  
To mix with hymns that Spirits make

and hear;  
And to fallen man their innocence is dear.

Enraptured Art draws from those sacred springs

Streams that reflect the poetry of things !  
Where Christian Martyrs stand in hues

portrayed,  
That, might a wish avail, would never fade,

Borne in their hands the lily and the palm

Shed round the altar a celestial calm ;

There, too, behold the lamb and guileless dove

Prest in the tenderness of virgin love  
To saintly bosoms !—Glorious is the blending

Of right affections climbing or descending  
Along a scale of light and life, with cares  
Alternate; carrying holy thoughts and prayers

Up to the sovereign seat of the Most High ;

Descending to the worm in charity ;  
Like those good Angels whom a dream of night

Gave, in the field of Luz, to Jacob's sight  
All, while *he* slept, treading the pendent stairs

Earthward or heavenward, radiant messengers,

That, with a perfect will in one accord  
Of strict obedience, serve the Almighty Lord ;

And with untired humility forbore  
To speed their errand by the wings they wore.

What a fair world were ours for verse to paint,

If Power could live at ease with self-restraint !

Opinion bow before the naked sense  
Of the great Vision,—faith in Providence;  
Merciful over all his creatures, just

To the least particle of sentient dust ;  
But fixing by immutable decrees

Seedtime and harvest for his purposes !  
Then would be closed the restless oblique eye

That looks for evil like a treacherous spy ;  
Disputes would then relax, like stormy winds

That into breezes sink ; impetuous minds  
By discipline endeavour to grow meek  
As Truth herself, whom they profess to seek.

Then Genius, shunning fellowship with Pride,

Would braid his golden locks at Wisdom's side ;

Love ebb and flow untroubled by caprice ;  
And not alone *harsh* tyranny would cease,

But unoffending creatures find release  
 From qualified oppression, whose defence 60  
 Rests on a hollow plea of recompense;  
 Thought-tempered wrongs, for each humane respect  
 Oft worse to bear, or deadlier in effect.  
 Witness those glances of indignant scorn  
 From some high-minded Slave, impelled  
 to spurn 65  
 The kindness that would make him less  
 forlorn;  
 Or, if the soul to bondage be subdued,  
 His look of pitiable gratitude!

Alas for thee, bright Galaxy of Isles,  
 Whose day departs in pomp, returns  
 with smiles— 70  
 To greet the flowers and fruitage of a  
 land,  
 As the sun mounts, by sea-born breezes  
 fanned;  
 A land whose azure mountain-tops are  
 seats  
 For Gods in council, whose green vales,  
 retreats  
 Fit for the shades of heroes, mingling  
 there 75  
 To breathe Elysian peace in upper air.

Though cold as winter, gloomy as the  
 grave,  
 Stone-walls a prisoner make, but not  
 a slave.  
 Shall man assume a property in man?  
 Lay on the moral will a withering ban?  
 Shame that our laws at distance still  
 protect 81  
 Enormities, which they at home reject!  
 "Slaves cannot breathe in England"—  
 yet that boast  
 Is but a mockery! when from coast to  
 coast,  
 Though *fettered* slave be none, her floors  
 and soil 85  
 Groan underneath a weight of slavish  
 toil,  
 For the poor Many, measured out by  
 rules  
 Fetched with cupidity from heartless  
 schools,

That to an Idol, falsely called "the  
 Wealth  
 Of Nations," sacrifice a People's health,  
 Body and mind and soul; a thirst so  
 keen 91  
 Is ever urging on the vast machine  
 Of sleepless Labour, 'mid whose dizzy  
 wheels  
 The Power least prized is that which  
 thinks and feels.

Then, for the pastimes of this delicate age,  
 And all the heavy or light vassalage 96  
 Which for their sakes we fasten, as may  
 suit  
 Our varying moods, on human kind or  
 brute,  
 'Twere well in little, as in great, to pause,  
 Lest Fancy trifle with eternal laws. 100  
 Not from his fellows only man may learn  
 Rights to compare and duties to discern!  
 All creatures and all objects, in degree,  
 Are friends and patrons of humanity.  
 There are to whom the garden, grove,  
 and field, 105  
 Perpetual lessons of forbearance yield;  
 Who would not lightly violate the grace  
 The lowliest flower possesses in its place;  
 Nor shorten the sweet life, too fugitive,  
 Which nothing less than Infinite Power  
 could give. 110

## XXXII.

[Composed 1846.—Published 1850.]

THE unremitting voice of nightly streams  
 That wastes so oft, we think, its tuneful  
 powers,  
 If neither soothing to the worm that  
 gleams  
 Through dewy grass, nor small birds  
 hushed in bowers,  
 Nor unto silent leaves and drowsy  
 flowers,— 5  
 That voice of unpretending harmony  
 (For who what is shall measure by what  
 seems  
 To be, or not to be,  
 Or tax high Heaven with prodigality?)  
 Wants not a healing influence that can  
 creep 10  
 Into the human breast, and mix with sleep

To regulate the motion of our dreams  
 For kindly issues—as through every clime  
 Was felt near murmuring brooks in  
 earliest time;  
 As, at this day, the rudest swains who  
 dwell 15  
 Where torrents roar, or hear the tinkling  
 knell  
 Of water-breaks, with grateful heart  
 could tell.

## XXXIII.

## THOUGHTS ON THE SEASONS.

[Composed 1829.—Published 1835.]

FLATTERED with promise of escape  
 From every hurtful blast,  
 Spring takes, O sprightly May! thy  
 shape,  
 Her loveliest and her last.

Less fair is summer riding high 5  
 In fierce solstitial power,  
 Less fair than when a lenient sky  
 Brings on her parting hour.

When earth repays with golden sheaves 10  
 The labours of the plough,  
 And ripening fruits and forest leaves  
 All brighten on the bough;

What pensive beauty autumn shows,  
 Before she hears the sound  
 Of winter rushing in, to close 15  
 The emblematic round!

Such be our Spring, our Summer such;  
 So may our Autumn blend  
 With hoary Winter, and Life touch,  
 Through heaven-born hope, her end! 20

## XXXIV.

## TO —.

UPON THE BIRTH OF HER FIRST-BORN  
 CHILD, MARCH, 1833.

[Composed March, 1833.—Published 1835.]

“Tum porro puer, ut sævis projectus ab undis  
 Navita, nudus humi jacet,” &c.—*Lucretius*.

LIKE a shipwrecked Sailor tost  
 By rough waves on a perilous coast,  
 Lies the Babe, in helplessness

And in tenderest nakedness,  
 Flung by labouring Nature forth 5  
 Upon the mercies of the earth.  
 Can its eyes beseech?—no more  
 Than the hands are free to implore:  
 Voice but serves for one brief cry;  
 Plaint was it? or prophecy 10  
 Of sorrow that will surely come?  
 Omen of man's grievous doom!

But, O Mother! by the close  
 Duly granted to thy throes;  
 By the silent thanks, now tending 15  
 Incense-like to Heaven, descending  
 Now to mingle and to move  
 With the gush of earthly love,  
 As a debt to that frail Creature,  
 Instrument of struggling Nature 20  
 For the blissful calm, the peace  
 Known but to this *one* release—  
 Can the pitying spirit doubt  
 That for human-kind springs out  
 From the penalty a sense 25  
 Of more than mortal recompense?

As a floating summer cloud,  
 Though of gorgeous drapery proud,  
 To the sun-burnt traveller,  
 Or the stooping labourer, 30  
 Oft-times makes its bounty known  
 By its shadow round him thrown;  
 So, by chequerings of sad cheer,  
 Heavenly Guardians, brooding near,  
 Of their presence tell—too bright 35  
 Haply for corporeal sight!  
 Ministers of grace divine  
 Feelingly their brows incline  
 O'er this seeming Castaway  
 Breathing, in the light of day, 40  
 Something like the faintest breath  
 That has power to baffle death—  
 Beautiful, while very weakness  
 Captivates like passive meekness.

And, sweet Mother! under warrant 45  
 Of the universal Parent,  
 Who repays in season due  
 Them who have, like thee, been true  
 To the filial chain let down  
 From his everlasting throne, 50  
 Angels hovering round thy couch,  
 With their softest whispers vouch,

That—whatever griefs may fret,  
 Cares entangle, sins beset,  
 This thy First-born, and with tears 55  
 Stain her cheek in future years—  
 Heavenly succour, not denied  
 To the babe, whate'er betide,  
 Will to the woman be supplied!

Mother! blest be thy calm ease; 60  
 Blest the starry promises,—  
 And the firmament benign  
 Hallowed be it, where they shine!  
 Yes, for them whose souls have scope  
 Ample for a winged hope, 65  
 And can earthward bend an ear  
 For needful listening, pledge is here,  
 That, if thy new-born Charge shall tread  
 In thy footsteps, and be led  
 By that other Guide, whose light 70  
 Of manly virtues, mildly bright,  
 Gave him first the wished-for part  
 In thy gentle virgin heart;  
 Then, amid the storms of life  
 Presignified by that dread strife 75  
 Whence ye have escaped together,  
 She may look for serene weather;  
 In all trials sure to find  
 Comfort for a faithful mind;  
 Kindlier issues, holier rest, 80  
 Than even now await her prest,  
 Conscious Nursling, to thy breast!

## XXXV.

## THE WARNING.

## A SEQUEL TO THE FOREGOING.

[Composed 1833.—Published 1835.]

LIST, the winds of March are blowing;  
 Her ground-flowers shrink, afraid of  
 showing  
 Their meek heads to the nipping air,  
 Which ye feel not, happy pair!  
 Sunk into a kindly sleep. 5  
 We, meanwhile, our hope will keep;  
 And if Time leagued with adverse Change  
 (Too busy fear!) shall cross its range,  
 Whatsoever check they bring,  
 Anxious duty hindering, 10  
 To like hope our prayers will cling.

Thus, while the ruminating spirit feeds  
 Upon the events of home as life proceeds,  
 Affections pure and holy in their source  
 Gain a fresh impulse, run a livelier course;  
 Hopes that within the Father's heart  
 prevail, 15  
 Are in the experienced Grandsire's slow  
 to fail;  
 And if the harp pleased his gay youth, it  
 rings  
 To his grave touch with no unready  
 strings,  
 While thoughts press on, and feelings  
 overflow, 20  
 And quick words round him fall like  
 flakes of snow.

Thanks to the Powers that yet main-  
 tain their sway,  
 And have renewed the tributary Lay.  
 Truths of the heart flock in with eager  
 pace,  
 And FANCY greets them with a fond  
 embrace; 25  
 Swift as the rising sun his beams extends  
 She shoots the tidings forth to distant  
 friends;  
 Their gifts she hails (deemed precious, as  
 they prove 30  
 For the unconscious Babe so prompt a  
 love!)—  
 But from this peaceful centre of delight  
 Vague sympathies have urged her to take  
 flight: 31  
 Rapt into upper regions, like the bee  
 That sucks from mountain-heath her  
 honey fee,  
 Or, like the warbling lark intent to shroud  
 His head in sunbeams or a bowery cloud,  
 She soars—and here and there her pinions  
 rest 36  
 On proud towers, like this humble cot-  
 tage, blest  
 With a new visitant, an infant guest—  
 Towers where red streamers flout the  
 breezy sky  
 In pomp foreseen by her creative eye, 40  
 When feasts shall crowd the hall, and  
 steeple bells  
 Glad proclamation make, and heights  
 and dells

Catch the blithe music as it sinks and  
 swells,  
 And harboured ships, whose pride is on  
 the sea,  
 Shall hoist their topmost flags in sign of  
 glee, 45  
 Honouring the hope of noble ancestry.

But who (though neither reckoning ills  
 assigned  
 By Nature, nor reviewing in the mind  
 The track that was, and is, and must be,  
 worn 49  
 With weary feet by all of woman born)—  
 Shall *now* by such a gift with joy be moved,  
 Nor feel the fulness of that joy reproved?  
 Not He, whose last faint memory will  
 command  
 The truth that Britain was his native  
 land;  
 Whose infant soul was tutored to confide  
 In the cleansed faith for which her mar-  
 tyrs died; 56  
 Whose boyish ear the voice of her renown  
 With rapture thrilled; whose Youth re-  
 vered the crown  
 Of Saxon liberty that Alfred wore,  
 Alfred, dear Babe, thy great Progenitor!  
 —Not He, who from her mellowed prac-  
 tice drew 61  
 His social sense of just, and fair, and  
 true;  
 And saw, thereafter, on the soil of France  
 Rash Polity begin her maniac dance,  
 Foundations broken up, the deeps run  
 wild, 65  
 Nor grieved to see (himself not unbe-  
 guiled)—  
 Woke from the dream, the dreamer to  
 upbraid,  
 And learn how sanguine expectations fade  
 When novel trusts by folly are betrayed,—  
 To see Presumption, turning pale, refrain  
 From further havoc, but repent in vain,—  
 Good aims lie down, and perish in the  
 road 72  
 Where guilt had urged them on with  
 ceaseless goad,  
 Proofs thickening round her that on  
 public ends  
 Domestic virtue vitally depends, . 75

That civic strife can turn the happiest  
 hearth  
 Into a grievous sore of self-tormenting  
 earth.

Can such a One, dear Babe! though  
 glad and proud  
 To welcome thee, repel the fears that  
 crowd  
 Into his English breast, and spare to quake  
 Less for his own than for thy innocent  
 sake? 81  
 Too late—or, should the providence of  
 God  
 Lead, through dark ways by sin and sor-  
 row trod,  
 Justice and peace to a secure abode,  
 Too soon—thou com'st into this breathing  
 world; 85  
 Ensigns of mimic outrage are unfurled.  
 Who shall preserve or prop the tottering  
 Realm?  
 What hand suffice to govern the state-  
 helm?  
 If in the aims of men the surest test  
 Of good or bad (whate'er be sought for or  
 profest) 90  
 Lie in the means required, or ways  
 ordained,  
 For compassing the end, else never gained;  
 Yet governors and governed both are  
 blind  
 To this plain truth, or fling it to the wind;  
 If to expedience principle must bow; 95  
 Past, future, shrinking up beneath the  
 incumbent Now;  
 If cowardly concession still must feed  
 The thirst for power in men who ne'er  
 concede;  
 Nor turn aside, unless to shape a way  
 For domination at some riper day; 100  
 If generous Loyalty must stand in awe  
 Of subtle Treason, in his mask of law,  
 Or with bravado insolent and hard,  
 Provoking punishment, to win reward;  
 If office help the factious to conspire, 105  
 And they who *should* extinguish, fan the  
 fire—  
 Then, will the sceptre be a straw, the  
 crown  
 Sit loosely, like the thistle's crest of down;

To be blown off at will, by Power that  
spares it  
In cunning patience, from the head that  
wears it. 110

Lost people, trained to theoretic feud!  
Lost above all, ye labouring multitude!  
Bewildered whether ye, by slanderous  
tongues

Deceived, mistake calamities for wrongs;  
And over fancied usurpations brood, 115  
Oft snapping at revenge in sullen mood;  
Or, from long stress of real injuries fly  
To desperation for a remedy;

In bursts of outrage spread your judgments wide,  
And to your wrath cry out, "Be thou our  
guide;" 120

Or, bound by oaths, come forth to tread  
earth's floor

In marshalled thousands, darkening street  
and moor

With the worst shape mock-patience ever  
wore;

Or, to the giddy top of self-esteem  
By Flatterers carried, mount into a  
dream 125

Of boundless suffrage, at whose sage  
behest

Justice shall rule, disorder be supprest,  
And every man sit down as Plenty's  
Guest!

—O for a bridle bitted with remorse  
To stop your Leaders in their headstrong  
course! 130

Oh may the Almighty scatter with His  
grace

These mists, and lead you to a safer place,  
By paths no human wisdom can fore-  
trace!

May He pour round you, from worlds far  
above

Man's feverish passions, His pure light of  
love, 135

That quietly restores the natural mien  
To hope, and makes truth willing to be  
seen!

Else shall your blood-stained hands in  
frenzy reap

Fields gaily sown when promises were  
cheap.— 139

Why is the Past belied with wicked art,  
The Future made to play so false a part.  
Among a people famed for strength of  
mind,

Foremost in freedom, noblest of man-  
kind?

We act as if we joyed in the sad tune  
Storms make in rising, valued in the  
moon 145

Nought but her changes. Thus, ungrate-  
ful Nation!

If thou persist, and, scorning modera-  
tion,

Spread for thyself the snares of tribu-  
lation,

Whom, then, shall meekness guard? What  
saving skill

Lie in forbearance, strength in standing  
still? 150

—Soon shall the widow (for the speed of  
Time

Nought equals when the hours are winged  
with crime)

Widow, or wife, implore on tremulous  
knee,

From him who judged her lord, a like  
decree;

The skies will weep o'er old men deso-  
late: 155

Ye little-ones! Earth shudders at your  
fate,

Outcasts and homeless orphans——

But turn, my Soul, and from the sleep-  
ing pair

Learn thou the beauty of omniscient care!  
Be strong in faith, bid anxious thoughts

lie still; 160

Seek for the good and cherish it—the ill  
Oppose, or bear with a submissive will.

## XXXVI.

[Composed 1833.—Published 1835.]

If this great world of joy and pain  
Revolve in one sure track;

If freedom, set, will rise again,  
And virtue, flown, come back;

Woe to the purblind crew who fill 5  
The heart with each day's care;

Nor gain, from past or future, skill  
To bear, and to forbear!

## XXXVII.

## THE LABOURER'S NOON-DAY HYMN.

[Composed 1834.—Published 1835.]

Up to the throne of God is borne  
The voice of praise at early morn,  
And he accepts the punctual hymn  
Sung as the light of day grows dim :

Nor will he turn his ear aside  
From holy offerings at noontide.  
Then here reposing let us raise  
A song of gratitude and praise.

What though our burthen be not light  
We need not toil from morn to night ;  
The respite of the mid-day hour  
Is in the thankful Creature's power.

Blest are the moments, doubly blest,  
That, drawn from this one hour of rest,  
Are with a ready heart bestowed  
Upon the service of our God !

Each field is then a hallowed spot,  
An altar is in each man's cot,  
A church in every grove that spreads  
Its living roof above our heads.

Look up to Heaven ! the industrious Sun  
Already half his race hath run ;  
He cannot halt nor go astray,  
But our immortal Spirits may.

Lord ! since his rising in the East,  
If we have faltered or transgressed,  
Guide, from thy love's abundant source,  
What yet remains of this day's course :

Help with thy grace, through life's short  
day,

Our upward and our downward way ;  
And glorify for us the west,  
When we shall sink to final rest.

## XXXVIII.

## ODE.

COMPOSED ON MAY MORNING.

[Composed 1826.—Published 1835.]

WHILE from the purpling east departs  
The star that led the dawn,  
Blithe Flora from her couch upstarts,  
For May is on the lawn.

A quickening hope, a freshening glee,  
Foreran the expected Power,  
Whose first-drawn breath from bush and  
tree

Shakes off that pearly shower.

All Nature welcomes Her whose sway  
Tempers the year's extremes ;  
Who scattereth lustres o'er noon-day,  
Like morning's dewy gleams ;  
While mellow warble, sprightly trill,  
The tremulous heart excite ;  
And hums the balmy air to still  
The balance of delight.

Time was, blest Power ! when youths and  
maids

At peep of dawn would rise,  
And wander forth, in forest glades  
Thy birth to solemnize.

Though mute the song—to grace the rite  
Untouched the hawthorn bough,  
Thy Spirit triumphs o'er the slight ;  
Man changes, but not Thou !

Thy feathered Lieges bill and wings  
In love's disport employ ;

Warmed by thy influence, creeping things  
Awake to silent joy :

Queen art thou still for each gay plant  
Where the slim wild deer roves ;  
And served in depths where fishes haunt  
Their own mysterious groves.

Cloud-piercing peak, and trackless heath,  
Instinctive homage pay ;

Nor wants the dim-lit cave a wreath  
To honour thee, sweet May !

Where cities fanned by thy brisk airs  
Behold a smokeless sky,  
Their puniest flower-pot-nursling dares  
To open a bright eye.

And if, on this thy natal morn,  
The pole, from which thy name

Hath not departed, stands forlorn  
Of song and dance and game ;

Still from the village-green a vow  
Aspires to thee address,

Wherever peace is on the brow,  
Or love within the breast.

Yes ! where Love nestles thou canst  
teach

The soul to love the more ;

Hearts also shall thy lessons reach  
That never loved before.  
Striped is the haughty one of pride,  
The bashful freed from fear,  
While rising, like the ocean-tide,  
In flows the joyous year.

Hush, feeble lyre ! weak words refuse  
The service to prolong !  
To yon exulting thrush the Muse  
Entrusts the imperfect song ;  
His voice shall chant, in accents clear,  
Throughout the live-long day,  
Till the first silver star appear,  
The sovereignty of May.

## XXXIX.

## TO MAY.

[Composed 1826-34.—Published 1835.]

THOUGH many suns have risen and set  
Since thou, blithe May, wert born,  
And Bards, who hailed thee, may forget  
Thy gifts, thy beauty scorn ;  
There are who to a birthday strain  
Confine not harp and voice,  
But evermore throughout thy reign  
Are grateful and rejoice !

Delicious odours ! music sweet,  
Too sweet to pass away !  
Oh for a deathless song to meet  
The soul's desire—a lay  
That, when a thousand years are told,  
Should praise thee, genial Power !  
Through summer heat, autumnal cold,  
And winter's dreariest hour.

Earth, sea, thy presence feel—nor less,  
If yon ethereal blue  
With its soft smile the truth express,  
The heavens have felt it too.  
The inmost heart of man if glad  
Partakes a livelier cheer ;  
And eyes that cannot but be sad  
Let fall a brightened tear.

Since thy return, through days and weeks  
Of hope that grew by stealth,  
How many wan and faded cheeks  
Have kindled into health !

The Old, by thee revived, have said,  
"Another year is ours ;"  
And wayworn Wanderers, poorly fed,  
Have smiled upon thy flowers.

Who tripping lips a merry song  
Amid his playful peers ?  
The tender Infant who was long  
A prisoner of fond fears ;  
But now, when every sharp-edged blast  
Is quiet in its sheath,  
His Mother leaves him free to taste  
Earth's sweetness in thy breath.

Thy help is with the weed that creeps  
Along the humblest ground ;  
No cliff so bare but on its steep  
Thy favours may be found ;  
But most on some peculiar nook  
That our own hands have drest,  
Thou and thy train are proud to look,  
And seem to love it best.

And yet how pleased we wander forth  
When May is whispering, "Come !  
Choose from the bowers of virgin earth  
The happiest for your home ;  
Heaven's bounteous love through me is  
spread  
From sunshine, clouds, winds, waves,  
Drops on the mouldering turret's head,  
And on your turf-clad graves !"

Such greeting heard, away with sighs  
For lilies that must fade,  
Or "the rathe primrose as it dies  
Forsaken" in the shade !  
Vernal fruitions and desires  
Are linked in endless chase ;  
While, as one kindly growth retires,  
Another takes its place.

And what if thou, sweet May, hast  
known  
Mishap by worm and blight ;  
If expectations newly blown  
Have perished in thy sight ;  
If loves and joys, while up they sprung,  
Were caught as in a snare ;  
Such is the lot of all the young,  
However bright and fair.

Lo ! Streams that April could not check  
Are patient of thy rule ;

Gurgling in foamy water-break,  
 Loitering in glassy pool:  
 By thee, thee only, could be sent  
 Such gentle mists as glide,  
 Curling with unconfirmed intent,  
 On that green mountain's side. 80

How delicate the leafy veil  
 Through which yon house of God  
 Gleams 'mid the peace of this deep dale  
 By few but shepherds trod!  
 And lowly huts, near beaten ways,  
 No sooner stand attired 85  
 In thy fresh wreaths, than they for  
 praise  
 Peep forth, and are admired.

Season of fancy and of hope,  
 Permit not for one hour 90  
 A blossom from thy crown to drop,  
 Nor add to it a flower!  
 Keep, lovely May, as if by touch  
 Of self-restraining art,  
 This modest charm of not too much, 95  
 Part seen, imagined part!

## XL.

## LINES

SUGGESTED BY A PORTRAIT FROM THE  
 PENCIL OF F. STONE.

[Composed 1834.—Published 1835.]

BEGUILED into forgetfulness of care  
 Due to the day's unfinished task; of pen  
 Or book regardless, and of that fair  
 scene  
 In Nature's prodigality displayed  
 Before my window, oftentimes and long 5  
 I gaze upon a Portrait whose mild gleam  
 Of beauty never ceases to enrich  
 The common light; whose stillness charms  
 the air,  
 Or seems to charm it, into like repose;  
 Whose silence, for the pleasure of the  
 ear, 10  
 Surpasses sweetest music. There she sits  
 With emblematic purity attired  
 In a white vest, white as her marble neck  
 Is, and the pillar of the throat would be  
 But for the shadow by the drooping chin  
 Cast into that recess—the tender shade,

The shade and light, both there and every-  
 where,  
 And through the very atmosphere she  
 breathes,  
 Broad, clear, and toned harmoniously,  
 with skill  
 That might from nature have been learnt  
 in the hour 20  
 When the lone shepherd sees the morning  
 spread  
 Upon the mountains. Look at her,  
 whose'er  
 Thou be that, kindling with a poet's soul,  
 Hast loved the painter's true Promethean  
 craft  
 Intensely—from Imagination take 25  
 The treasure,—what mine eyes behold see  
 thou,  
 Even though the Atlantic ocean roll  
 between.

A silver line, that runs from brow to  
 crown  
 And in the middle parts the braided hair,  
 Just serves to show how delicate a soil 30  
 The golden harvest grows in; and those  
 eyes,  
 Soft and capacious as a cloudless sky  
 Whose azure depth their colour emulates,  
 Must needs be conversant with upward  
 looks,  
 Prayer's voiceless service; but now, seek-  
 ing nought 35  
 And shunning nought, their own peculiar  
 life  
 Of motion they renounce, and with the  
 head  
 Partake its inclination towards earth  
 In humble grace, and quiet pensiveness  
 Caught at the point where it stops short  
 of sadness. 40

Offspring of soul-bewitching Art, make  
 me  
 Thy confidant! say, whence derived that  
 air  
 Of calm abstraction? Can the ruling  
 thought  
 Be with some lover far away, or one  
 Crossed by misfortune, or of doubted  
 faith? 45

Inapt conjecture! Childhood here, a  
 moon  
 Crescent in simple loveliness serene,  
 Has but approached the gates of woman-  
 hood,  
 Not entered them; her heart is yet  
 unpierced  
 By the blind Archer-god; her fancy  
 free: 50  
 The fount of feeling, if unsought else-  
 where,  
 Will not be found.

Her right hand, as it lies  
 Across the slender wrist of the left arm  
 Upon her lap reposing, holds—but mark  
 How slackly, for the absent mind per-  
 mits 55  
 No firmer grasp—a little wild-flower,  
 joined  
 As in a posy, with a few pale ears  
 Of yellowing corn, the same that over-  
 topped  
 And in their common birthplace sheltered  
 it  
 Till they were plucked together; a blue  
 flower 60  
 Called by the thrifty husbandman a weed;  
 But Ceres, in her garland, might have  
 worn  
 That ornament, unblamed. The floweret,  
 held  
 In scarcely conscious fingers, was, she  
 knows,  
 (Her Father told her so) in youth's gay  
 dawn 65  
 Her Mother's favourite; and the orphan  
 Girl,  
 In her own dawn—a dawn less gay and  
 bright,  
 Loves it, while there in solitary peace  
 She sits, for that departed Mother's sake.  
 —Not from a source less sacred is derived  
 (Surely I do not err) that pensive air 71  
 Of calm abstraction through the face  
 diffused  
 And the whole person.

Words have something told  
 More than the pencil can, and verily  
 More than is needed, but the precious  
 Art 75  
 Forgives their interference—Art divine,

That both creates and fixes, in despite  
 Of Death and Time, the marvels it hath  
 wrought.

Strange contrasts have we in this world  
 of ours!

That posture, and the look of filial love 80  
 Thinking of past and gone, with what is  
 left

Dearly united, might be swept away  
 From this fair Portrait's fleshly Archetype,  
 Even by an innocent fancy's slightest  
 freak

Banished, nor ever, haply, be restored 85  
 To their lost place, or meet in harmony  
 So exquisite; but *here* do they abide,  
 Enshrined for ages. Is not then the Art  
 Godlike, a humble branch of the divine,  
 In visible quest of immortality, 90  
 Stretched forth with trembling hope?—In  
 every realm,

From high Gibraltar to Siberian plains,  
 Thousands, in each variety of tongue  
 That Europe knows, would echo this  
 appeal;

One above all, a Monk who waits on God  
 In the magnific Convent built of yore 96  
 To sanctify the Escorial palace. He—  
 Guiding, from cell to cell and room to  
 room,

A British Painter (eminent for truth  
 In character, and depth of feeling, shown  
 By labours that have touched the hearts  
 of kings, 101

And are endeared to simple cottagers)—  
 Came, in that service, to a glorious work,  
 Our Lord's Last Supper, beautiful as  
 when first

The appropriate Picture, fresh from  
 Titian's hand, 105  
 Graced the Refectory: and there, while  
 both

Stood with eyes fixed upon that master-  
 piece,

The hoary Father in the Stranger's ear  
 Breathed out these words:—"Here daily  
 do we sit, 109

Thanks given to God for daily bread, and  
 here

Pondering the mischiefs of these restless  
 times,

And thinking of my Brethren, dead, dispersed,  
 Or changed and changing, I not seldom gaze  
 Upon this solemn Company unmoved  
 By shock of circumstance, or lapse of years,<sup>115</sup>  
 Until I cannot but believe that they—  
 They are in truth the Substance, we the Shadows.”

So spake the mild Jeronymite, his griefs  
 Melting away within him like a dream  
 Ere he had ceased to gaze, perhaps to speak:<sup>120</sup>  
 And I, grown old, but in a happier land,  
 Domestic Portrait! have to verse con-  
 signed  
 In thy calm presence those heart-moving words:  
 Words that can soothe, more than they agitate;  
 Whose spirit, like the angel that went down<sup>125</sup>  
 Into Bethesda's pool, with healing virtue  
 Informs the fountain in the human breast  
 Which by the visitation was disturbed.  
 —But why this stealing tear? Com-  
 panion mute,  
 On thee I look, not sorrowing; fare thee well,<sup>130</sup>  
 My Song's Inspirer, once again farewell<sup>1</sup>!

### XLI.

#### THE FOREGOING SUBJECT RESUMED.

[Composed 1834.—Published 1835.]

AMONG a grave fraternity of Monks,  
 For One, but surely not for One alone,  
 Triumphs, in that great work, the  
 Painter's skill,  
 Humbling the body, to exalt the soul;  
 Yet representing, amid wreck and wrong

<sup>1</sup> The pile of buildings composing the palace and convent of San Lorenzo, has, in common usage, lost its proper name in that of the *Escorial*, a village at the foot of the hill upon which the splendid edifice, built by Philip the Second, stands. It need scarcely be added that Wilkie is the painter alluded to.

And dissolution and decay, the warm<sup>6</sup>  
 And breathing life of flesh, as if already  
 Clothed with impassive majesty, and  
 graced  
 With no mean earnest of a heritage  
 Assigned to it in future worlds. Thou,  
 too,<sup>10</sup>  
 With thy memorial flower, meek Por-  
 traiture!  
 From whose serene companionship I  
 passed  
 Pursued by thoughts that haunt me still;  
 thou also—  
 Though but a simple object, into light  
 Called forth by those affections that  
 endear<sup>15</sup>  
 The private hearth; though keeping thy  
 sole seat  
 In singleness, and little tried by time,  
 Creation, as it were, of yesterday—  
 With a congenial function art endued  
 For each and all of us, together joined<sup>20</sup>  
 In course of nature under a low roof  
 By charities and duties that proceed  
 Out of the bosom of a wiser vow.  
 To a like salutary sense of awe  
 Or sacred wonder, growing with the  
 power<sup>25</sup>  
 Of meditation that attempts to weigh,  
 In faithful scales, things and their op-  
 posites,  
 Can thy enduring quiet gently raise  
 A household small and sensitive,—whose  
 love,  
 Dependent as in part its blessings are<sup>30</sup>  
 Upon frail ties dissolving or dissolved  
 On earth, will be revived, we trust, in  
 heaven<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> In the class entitled “Mysings,” in Mr. Southey's *Minor Poems*, is one upon his own miniature Picture, taken in childhood, and another upon a landscape painted by Gaspar Poussin. It is possible that every word of the above verses, though similar in subject, might have been written had the author been unacquainted with those beautiful effusions of poetic sentiment. But, for his own satisfaction, he must be allowed thus publicly to acknowledge the pleasure those two Poems of his Friend have given him, and the grateful influence they have upon his mind as often as he reads them, or thinks of them.

## XLII.

[Composed 1844.—Published 1845.]

So fair, so sweet, withal so sensitive,  
 Would that the little Flowers were born  
 to live,  
 Conscious of half the pleasure which they  
 give;

That to this mountain-daisy's self were  
 known  
 The beauty of its star-shaped shadow,  
 thrown  
 On the smooth surface of this naked  
 stone!

And what if hence a bold desire should  
 mount  
 High as the Sun, that he could take  
 account  
 Of all that issues from his glorious  
 fount!

So might he ken how by his sovereign  
 aid  
 These delicate companionships are  
 made;  
 And how he rules the pomp of light and  
 shade;

And were the Sister-power that shines by  
 night  
 So privileged, what a countenance of de-  
 light  
 Would through the clouds break forth on  
 human sight!

Fond fancies! wheresoe'er shall turn thine  
 eye  
 On earth, air, ocean, or the starry  
 sky,  
 Converse with Nature in pure sym-  
 pathy;

All vain desires, all lawless wishes  
 quelled,  
 Be Thou to love and praise alike im-  
 pelled,  
 Whatever boon is granted or withheld.

## XLIII.

UPON SEEING A COLOURED DRAW-  
ING OF THE BIRD OF PARADISE  
IN AN ALBUM.

[Composed 1835-6.—Published 1837.]

Who rashly strove thy Image to portray?  
 Thou buoyant minion of the tropic air;  
 How could he think of the live creature—  
 gay

With a divinity of colours, drest  
 In all her brightness, from the dancing  
 crest

Far as the last gleam of the filmy train  
 Extended and extending to sustain  
 The motions that it graces—and for-  
 bear

To drop his pencil! Flowers of every  
 clime

Depicted on these pages smile at time; 10  
 And gorgeous insects copied with nice  
 care

Are here, and likenesses of many a shell  
 Tossed ashore by restless waves,  
 Or in the diver's grasp fetched up from  
 caves

Where sea-nymphs might be proud to  
 dwell: 15

But whose rash hand (again I ask) could  
 dare,

'Mid casual tokens and promiscuous  
 shows,

To circumscribe this Shape in fixed re-  
 pose;

Could imitate for indolent survey,  
 Perhaps for touch profane, 20

Plumes that might catch, but cannot  
 keep, a stain;

And, with cloud-streaks lightest and lofti-  
 est, share

The sun's first greeting, his last farewell  
 ray!

Resplendent Wanderer! followed with  
 glad eyes

Where'er her course; mysterious Bird! 25  
 To whom, by wondering Fancy stirred,

Eastern Islanders have given  
 A holy name—the Bird of Heaven!

|  |    |  |
|--|----|--|
| And even a title higher still,           |    | Uphold our Spirits urged to kindred flight |
| The Bird of God ! whose blessed will     | 30 | On wings that fear no glance of God's      |
| She seems performing as she flies        |    | pure sight,                                |
| Over the earth and through the skies     |    | No tempest from his breath, their pro-     |
| In never-wearied search of Paradise—     |    | mised rest                                 |
| Region that crowns her beauty with the   |    | Seeking with indefatigable quest           |
| name                                     |    | 40   |
| She bears for us—for us how blest,       | 35 | Above a world that deems itself most       |
| How happy at all seasons, could like aim |    | wise                                       |
|  |    | When most enslaved by gross realities !    |

# SONNETS

## DEDICATED TO LIBERTY AND ORDER.

### I.

COMPOSED AFTER READING A NEWS-  
PAPER OF THE DAY.

[Composed 1831.—Published 1835.]

"PEOPLE! your chains are severing link  
by link;  
Soon shall the Rich be levelled down—the  
Poor  
Meet them half way." Vain boast! for  
These, the more  
They thus would rise, must low and lower  
sink  
Till, by repentance stung, they fear to  
think;  
While all lie prostrate, save the tyrant  
few  
Bent in quick turns each other to undo,  
And mix the poison, they themselves  
must drink.  
Mistrust thyself, vain Country! cease to  
cry,  
"Knowledge will save me from the  
threatened woe."  
For if than other rash ones more thou  
know,  
Yet on presumptuous wing as far would  
fly  
Above thy knowledge as they dared to go,  
Thou wilt provoke a heavier penalty.

### \* II.

UPON THE LATE GENERAL FAST.  
MARCH, 1832.

[Composed 1832.—Published 1833.]

RELUCTANT call it was; the rite delayed;  
And in the Senate some there were who  
doffed  
The last of their humanity, and scoffed  
At providential judgments, undismayed  
By their own daring. But the People  
prayed

As with one voice; their flinty heart grew  
soft

With penitential sorrow, and aloft  
Their spirit mounted, crying, "God us  
aid!"

Oh that with aspirations more intense,  
Chastised by self-abasement more pro-  
found,

This People, once so happy, so renowned  
For liberty, would seek from God defence  
Against far heavier ill, the pestilence  
Of revolution, impiously unbound!

### III.

[Composed probably 1833.—Published 1833.]

SAID Secrecy to Cowardice and Fraud,  
Falsehood and Treachery, in close council  
met,

Deep under ground, in Pluto's cabinet,  
"The frost of England's pride will soon  
be thawed;

Hooded the open brow that overawed  
Our schemes; the faith and honour, never  
yet

By us with hope encountered, be upset;—  
For once I burst my bands, and cry, ap-  
plaud!"

Then whispered she, "The Bill is carrying  
out!"

They heard, and, starting up, the Brood  
of Night

Clapped hands, and shook with glee their  
matted locks;

All Powers and Places that abhor the  
light

Joined in the transport, echoed back their  
shout,

Hurrah for——<sup>1</sup>, hugging his Ballot-  
box!

<sup>1</sup> I.e. Grote.—Ed.

## IV.

[Composed 1838.—Published 1838.]

BLEST Statesman He, whose Mind's unselfish will  
 Leaves him at ease among grand thoughts:  
     whose eye  
 Sees that, apart from magnanimity,  
 Wisdom exists not; nor the humbler skill  
 Of Prudence, disentangling good and ill  
 With patient care. What tho' assaults  
     run high,  
 They daunt not him who holds his ministry,  
 Resolute, at all hazards, to fulfil  
 Its duties;—prompt to move, but firm to wait,—  
 Knowing, things rashly sought are rarely found;  
     10  
 That, for the functions of an ancient State—  
 Strong by her charters, free because imbound,  
 Servant of Providence, not slave of Fate—  
 Perilous is sweeping change, all chance unsound.

## V.

IN ALLUSION TO VARIOUS RECENT HISTORIES AND NOTICES OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

[Composed ?.—Published 1842.]

PORTENTOUS change when History can appear  
 As the cool Advocate of foul device;  
 Reckless audacity extol, and jeer  
 At consciences perplexed with scruples nice!  
 They who bewail not, must abhor, the sneer  
     5  
 Born of Conceit, Power's blind Idolater;  
 Or haply sprung from vaunting Cowardice  
 Betrayed by mockery of holy fear.  
 Hath it not long been said the wrath of Man  
 Works not the righteousness of God? Oh bend,  
     10  
 Bend, ye Perverse! to judgments from on High,

Laws that lay under Heaven's perpetual ban  
 All principles of action that transcend  
 The sacred limits of humanity.

## VI.

CONTINUED.

[Composed ?.—Published 1842.]

WHO ponders National events shall find  
 An awful balancing of loss and gain,  
 Joy based on sorrow, good with ill combined,  
 And proud deliverance issuing out of pain  
 And direful throes; as if the All-ruling Mind,  
     5  
 With whose perfection it consists to ordain  
 Volcanic burst, earthquake, and hurricane,  
 Dealt in like sort with feeble human kind  
 By laws immutable. But woe for him  
 Who thus deceived shall lend an eager hand  
     10  
 To social havoc. Is not Conscience ours,  
 And Truth, whose eye guilt only can make dim;  
 And Will, whose office, by divine command,  
 Is to control and check disordered Powers?

## VII.

CONCLUDED.

[Composed ?.—Published 1842.]

LONG-FAVoured England! be not thou misled  
 By monstrous theories of alien growth,  
 Lest alien frenzy seize thee, waxing wroth,  
 Self-smitten till thy garments reek dyed red  
 With thy own blood, which tears in torrents shed  
     5  
 Fail to wash out, tears flowing ere thy troth  
 Be plighted, not to ease but sullen sloth,  
 Or wan despair—the ghost of false hope fled  
 Into a shameful grave. Among thy youth,

My Country! if such warning be held  
 dear, 10  
 Then shall a Veteran's heart be thrilled  
 with joy,  
 One who would gather from eternal truth,  
 For time and season, rules that work to  
 cheer—  
 Not scourge, to save the People—not  
 destroy.

VIII.

[Composed 1839.—Published 1842.]

MEN of the Western World! in Fate's  
 dark book  
 Whence these opprobrious leaves of dire  
 portent?  
 Think ye your British Ancestors forsook  
 Their native Land, for outrage provid-  
 ent;  
 From unsubmitive necks the bridle  
 shook 5  
 To give, in their Descendants, freer vent  
 And wider range to passions turbulent,  
 To mutual tyranny a deadlier look?  
 Nay, said a voice, soft as the south wind's  
 breath,  
 Dive through the stormy surface of the  
 flood 10  
 To the great current flowing underneath;  
 Explore the countless springs of silent  
 good;  
 So shall the truth be better understood,  
 And thy grieved Spirit brighten strong  
 in faith.

IX.

TO THE PENNSYLVANIANS.

[Composed probably January or February, 1845.  
 —Published 1845.]

DAYS undefiled by luxury or sloth,  
 Firm self-denial, manners grave and staid,  
 Rights equal, laws with cheerfulness  
 obeyed,  
 Words that require no sanction from an  
 oath,  
 And simple honesty a common growth— 5  
 This high repute, with bounteous Nature's  
 aid,  
 Won confidence, now ruthlessly betrayed

At will, your power the measure of your  
 troth!—  
 All who revere the memory of Penn  
 Grieve for the land on whose wild woods  
 his name 10  
 Was fondly grafted with a virtuous aim,  
 Renounced, abandoned by degenerate Men  
 For state-dishonour black as ever came  
 To upper air from Mammon's loathsome  
 den.

X.

AT BOLOGNA, IN REMEMBRANCE OF  
 THE LATE INSURRECTIONS, 1837.

I.

[Composed probably 1837.—Published: vol. of 1842.]  
 AH why deceive ourselves! by no mere fit  
 Of sudden passion roused shall men attain  
 True freedom where for ages they have  
 lain  
 Bound in a dark abominable pit,  
 With life's best sinews more and more  
 unknit. 5  
 Here, there, a banded few who loathe the  
 chain  
 May rise to break it: effort worse than  
 vain  
 For thee, O great Italian nation, split  
 Into those jarring fractions.—Let thy  
 scope  
 Be one fixed mind for all; thy rights  
 approve 10  
 To thy own conscience gradually re-  
 newed;  
 Learn to make Time the father of wise  
 Hope;  
 Then trust thy cause to the arm of Forti-  
 tude,  
 The light of Knowledge, and the warmth  
 of Love.

XI.

CONTINUED.

II.

[Composed probably 1837.—Published: vol. of 1842.]  
 HARD task! exclaim the undisciplined,  
 to lean  
 On Patience coupled with such slow en-  
 deavour,  
 That long-lived servitude must last for  
 ever.

erish the grovelling few, who, prest  
between  
Wrongs and the terror of redress, would  
wean  
illions from glorious aims. Our chains  
to sever  
et us break forth in tempest now or  
never!—  
That, is there then no space for golden  
mean  
nd gradual progress?—Twilight leads  
to day,  
nd, even within the burning zones of  
earth,  
he hastiest sunrise yields a temperate  
ray;  
he softest breeze to fairest flowers gives  
birth:  
hink not that Prudence dwells in dark  
abodes,  
he scans the future with the eye of  
gods.

## XII.

## CONCLUDED.

## III.

[Composed probably 1837.—Published: vol. of  
1842.]

s leaves are to the tree whereon they  
grow  
nd wither, every human generation  
to the Being of a mighty nation,  
oked in our world's embrace through  
weal and woe;  
hought that should teach the zealot to  
forego  
ash schemes, to abjure all selfish agita-  
tion,  
nd seek through noiseless pains and  
moderation  
e unblemished good they only can  
bestow.  
as! with most, who weigh futurity  
gainst time present, passion holds the  
scales:  
nce equal ignorance of both prevails,  
ad nations sink; or, struggling to be  
free,

Are doomed to flounder on, like wounded  
whales  
Tossed on the bosom of a stormy sea.

## XIII.

[Composed January or February, 1845.—Pub-  
lished 1845.]

YOUNG ENGLAND—what is then become  
of Old,  
Of dear Old England? Think they she is  
dead,  
Dead to the very name? Presumption fed  
On empty air! That name will keep its  
hold  
In the true filial bosom's inmost fold  
For ever.—The Spirit of Alfred, at the  
head  
Of all who for her rights watched, toiled  
and bled,  
Knows that this prophecy is not too bold.  
What—how! shall she submit in will and  
deed  
To Beardless Boys—an imitative race, to  
The *servum pecus* of a Gallic breed?  
Dear Mother! if thou *must* thy steps re-  
trace,  
Go where at least meek Innocency dwells;  
Let Babes and Sucklings be thy oracles.

## XIV.

[Composed ?.—Published 1842.]

FEEL for the wrongs to universal ken  
Daily exposed, woe that unshrouded lies;  
And seek the Sufferer in his darkest den,  
Whether conducted to the spot by sighs  
And moanings, or he dwells (as if the  
wren  
Taught him concealment) hidden from all  
eyes  
In silence and the awful modesties  
Of sorrow;—feel for all, as brother Men!  
Rest not in hope want's icy chain to thaw  
By casual boons and formal charities; to  
Learn to be just, just through impartial  
law;  
Far as ye may, erect and equalize;  
And, what ye cannot reach by statute,  
draw  
Each from his fountain of self-sacrifice!

# SONNETS UPON THE PUNISHMENT OF DEATH.

## IN SERIES.

[Composed 1839-40.—Published December, 1841 (*Quarterly Review*); vol. of 1842.]

### I.

SUGGESTED BY THE VIEW OF LANCASTER CASTLE (ON THE ROAD FROM THE SOUTH).

THIS Spot—at once unfolding sight so fair

Of sea and land, with yon grey towers that still

Rise up as if to lord it over air—

Might soothe in human breasts the sense of ill,

Or charm it out of memory; yea, might fill

The heart with joy and gratitude to God

For all his bounties upon man bestowed:  
Why bears it then the name of "Weeping Hill"?

Thousands, as toward yon old Lancastrian Towers,

A prison's crown, along this way they past

For lingering durance or quick death with shame,

From this bare eminence thereon have cast

Their first look—blinded as tears fell in showers

Shed on their chains; and hence that doleful name.

### II.

TENDERLY do we feel by Nature's law

For worst offenders: though the heart will heave

With indignation, deeply moved we grieve,

In after-thought, for Him who stood in awe

Neither of God nor man, and only saw, 5  
Lost wretch, a horrible device enthroned

On proud temptations, till the victim groaned

Under the steel his hand had dared to draw.

But O, restrain compassion, if its course,  
As oft befalls, prevent or turn aside 10

Judgments and aims and acts whose higher source

Is sympathy with the unforewarned, who died

Blameless—with them that shuddered o'er his grave,

And all who from the law firm safety crave.

### III.

THE Roman Consul doomed his sons to die

Who had betrayed their country. The stern word

Afforded (may it through all time afford)  
A theme for praise and admiration high.

Upon the surface of humanity 5  
He rested not; its depths his mind explored;

He felt; but his parental bosom's lord  
Was Duty,—Duty calmed his agony.

And some, we know, when they by wilful act

A single human life have wrongly taken,  
Pass sentence on themselves, confess the fact,

And, to atone for it, with soul unshaken 11

Kneel at the feet of Justice, and, for  
faith  
Broken with all mankind, solicit death.

## IV.

Is *Death*, when evil against good has  
fought  
With such fell mastery that a man may  
dare  
By deeds the blackest purpose to lay  
bare—  
Is *Death*, for one to that condition  
brought,—  
For him, or any one,—the thing that  
ought 5  
To be *most* dreaded? Lawgivers, beware,  
Lest, capital pains remitting till ye spare  
The murderer, ye, by sanction to that  
thought,  
Seemingly given, debase the general mind;  
Tempt the vague will tried standards to  
disown; 10  
Nor only palpable restraints unbind,  
But upon Honour's head disturb the  
crown,  
Whose absolute rule permits not to with-  
stand  
In the weak love of life his least com-  
mand.

## V.

Nor to the object specially designed,  
Howe'er momentous in itself it be,  
Good to promote or curb depravity,  
Is the wise Legislator's view confined.  
His Spirit, when most severe, is oft most  
kind; 5  
As all Authority in earth depends  
On Love and Fear, their several powers  
he blends,  
Copying with awe the one Paternal  
mind.  
Uncaught by processes in show humane,  
He feels how far the act would derogate  
From even the humblest functions of the  
State; 11  
If she, self-shorn of Majesty, ordain  
That never more shall hang upon her  
breath  
The last alternative of Life or Death.

## VI.

YE brood of Conscience—Spectres! that  
frequent  
The bad man's restless walk, and haunt  
his bed—  
Fiends in your aspect, yet beneficent  
In act, as hovering Angels when they  
spread  
Their wings to guard the 'unconscious  
Innocent— 5  
Slow be the Statutes of the land to share  
A laxity that could not but impair  
Your power to punish crime, and so  
prevent.  
And ye, Beliefs! coiled serpent-like  
about  
The adage on all tongues, "Murder will  
out." 10  
How shall your ancient warnings work  
for good  
In the full might they hitherto have  
shown,  
If for deliberate shedder of man's blood  
Survive not Judgment that requires his  
own?

## VII.

BEFORE the world had past her time of  
youth  
While polity and discipline were weak,  
The precept eye for eye, and tooth for  
tooth,  
Came forth—a light, though but as of  
daybreak,  
Strong as could then be borne. A Master  
meek 5  
Proscribed the spirit fostered by that  
rule,  
Patience *his* law, long-suffering *his* school,  
And love the end, which all through  
peace must seek.  
But lamentably do they err who strain  
His mandates, given rash impulse to  
control 10  
And keep vindictive thirstings from the  
soul,  
So far that, if consistent in their scheme,  
They must forbid the State to inflict a  
pain,  
Making of social order a mere dream.

VIII.

Fit retribution, by the moral code  
 Determined, lies beyond the State's embrace,  
 Yet, as she may, for each peculiar case  
 She plants well-measured terrors in the road  
 Of wrongful acts. Downward it is and broad,  
 And, the main fear once doomed to banishment,  
 Far oftener then, bad ushering worse event,  
 Blood would be spilt that in his dark abode  
 Crime might lie better hid. And, should the change  
 Take from the horror due to a foul deed,  
 Pursuit and evidence so far must fail,  
 And, guilt escaping, passion then might plead  
 In angry spirits for her old free range,  
 And the "wild justice of revenge" prevail.

IX.

THOUGH to give timely warning and deter  
 Is one great aim of penalty, extend  
 Thy mental vision further and ascend  
 Far higher, else full surely shalt thou err.  
 What is a State? The wise behold in her  
 A creature born of time, that keeps one eye  
 Fixed on the statutes of Eternity,  
 To which her judgments reverently defer.  
 Speaking through Law's dispassionate voice the State  
 Endues her conscience with external life  
 And being, to preclude or quell the strife  
 Of individual will, to elevate  
 The grovelling mind, the erring to recall,  
 And fortify the moral sense of all.

X.

OUR bodily life, some plead, that life the shrine  
 Of an immortal spirit, is a gift  
 So sacred, so informed with light divine,  
 That no tribunal, though most wise to sift  
 Deed and intent, should turn the Being adrift

Into that world where penitential tear  
 May not avail, nor prayer have for God's ear  
 A voice—that world whose veil no hand  
 can lift  
 For earthly sight. "Eternity and Time,"  
*They* urge, "have interwoven claims and rights  
 Not to be jeopardised through foulest crime:  
 The sentence rule by mercy's heaven-born lights."  
 Even so; but measuring not by finite sense  
 Infinite Power, perfect Intelligence.

XI.

Ah, think how one compelled for life to abide  
 Locked in a dungeon needs must eat the heart  
 Out of his own humanity, and part  
 With every hope that mutual cares provide;  
 And, should a less unnatural doom confide  
 In life-long exile on a savage coast,  
 Soon the relapsing penitent may boast  
 Of yet more heinous guilt, with fiercer pride.  
 Hence thoughtful Mercy, Mercy sage and pure,  
 Sanctions the forfeiture that Law demands,  
 Leaving the final issue in *His* hands  
 Whose goodness knows no change, whose love is sure,  
 Who sees, foresees; who cannot judge amiss,  
 And wafts at will the contrite soul to bliss.

XII.

SEE the Condemned alone within his cell  
 And prostrate at some moment when remorse  
 Stings to the quick, and, with resistless force,  
 Assaults the pride she strove in vain to quell.  
 Then mark him, him who could so long rebel,

The crime confessed, a kneeling Penitent  
 Before the Altar, where the Sacrament  
 Softens his heart, till from his eyes  
     outwell  
 Tears of salvation. Welcome death! while  
     Heaven  
 Does in this change exceedingly rejoice;  
 While yet the solemn heed the State hath  
     given  
 Helps him to meet the last Tribunal's  
     voice  
 In faith, which fresh offences, were he  
     cast  
 On old temptations, might for ever blast.

## XIII.

## CONCLUSION.

YES, though He well may tremble at the  
     sound  
 Of his own voice, who from the judgment-  
     seat  
 Sends the pale Convict to his last retreat  
 In death; though Listeners shudder all  
     around,  
 They know the dread requital's source  
     profound;  
 Nor is, they feel, its wisdom obsolete—  
 (Would that it were!) the sacrifice un-  
     meet  
 For Christian Faith. But hopeful signs  
     abound;  
 The social rights of man breathe purer  
     air;  
 Religion deepens her preventive care; 10

Then, moved by needless fear of past  
     abuse,  
 Strike not from Law's firm hand that  
     awful rod,  
 But leave it thence to drop for lack of  
     use:  
 Oh, speed the blessed hour, Almighty  
     God!

## XIV.

## APOLOGY.

THE formal World relaxes her cold chain  
 For One who speaks in numbers; ampler  
     scope  
 His utterance finds; and, conscious of the  
     gain,  
 Imagination works with bolder hope  
 The cause of grateful reason to sustain; 5  
 And, serving Truth, the heart more  
     strongly beats  
 Against all barriers which his labour  
     meets  
 In lofty place, or humble Life's domain.  
 Enough;—before us lay a painful road,  
 And guidance have I sought in duteous  
     love  
 From Wisdom's heavenly Father. Hence  
     hath flowed  
 Patience, with trust that, whatsoe'er the  
     way  
 Each takes in this high matter, all may  
     move  
 Cheered with the prospect of a brighter  
     day.

# MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

## I.

### EPISTLE

TO SIR GEORGE HOWLAND BEAUMONT,  
BART.

From the South-west Coast of Cumberland.—1811.

[Composed 1811.—Published: vol. of 1842]

FAR from our home by Grasmere's quiet  
Lake,  
From the Vale's peace which all her  
fields partake,  
Here on the bleakest point of Cumbria's  
shore  
We sojourn stunned by Ocean's ceaseless  
roar;  
While, day by day, grim neighbour! huge  
Black Comb 5  
Frowns deepening visibly his native  
gloom,  
Unless, perchance rejecting in despite  
What on the Plain we have of warmth  
and light,  
In his own storms he hides himself from  
sight.  
Rough is the time; and thoughts, that  
would be free 10  
From heaviness, oft fly, dear Friend, to  
thee;  
Turn from a spot where neither sheltered  
road  
Nor hedge-row screen invites my steps  
abroad;  
Where one poor Plane-tree, having as it  
might  
Attained a stature twice a tall man's  
height, 15  
Hopeless of further growth, and brown  
and sere  
Through half the summer, stands with  
top cut sheer,

Like an unshifting weathercock which  
proves  
How cold the quarter that the wind best  
loves,  
Or like a Centinel that, evermore 20  
Darkening the window, ill defends the  
door  
Of this unfinished house—a Fortress bare,  
Where strength has been the Builder's  
only care;  
Whose rugged walls may still for years  
demand  
The final polish of the Plasterer's hand. 25  
—This Dwelling's Inmate more than three  
weeks' space  
And oft a Prisoner in the cheerless place,  
I—of whose touch the fiddle would com-  
plain,  
Whose breath would labour at the flute in  
vain,  
In music all unversed, nor blessed with  
skill 30  
A bridge to copy, or to paint a mill,  
Tired of my books, a scanty company!  
And tired of listening to the boisterous  
sea—  
Pace between door and window mutter-  
ing rhyme,  
An old resource to cheat a froward time!  
Though these dull hours (mine is it, or  
their shame?) 36  
Would tempt me to renounce that humble  
aim.  
—But if there be a Muse who, free to  
take  
Her seat upon Olympus, doth forsake  
Those heights (like Phœbus when his  
golden locks 40  
He veiled, attendant on Thessalian flocks)  
And, in disguise, a Milkmaid with her  
pail  
Trips down the pathways of some winding  
dale;

Or, like a Mermaid, warbles on the  
shores  
To fishers mending nets beside their  
doors; 45  
Or, Pilgrim-like, on forest moss reclined,  
Gives plaintive ditties to the heedless  
wind,  
Or listens to its play among the boughs  
Above her head and so forgets her vows—  
If such a Visitant of Earth there be 50  
And she would deign this day to smile  
on me  
And aid my verse, content with local  
bounds  
Of natural beauty and life's daily rounds,  
Thoughts, chances, sights, or doings,  
which we tell  
Without reserve to those whom we love  
well— 55  
Then haply, Beaumont! words in current  
clear  
Will flow, and on a welcome page ap-  
pear  
Duly before thy sight, unless they perish  
here.

What shall I treat of? News from  
Mona's Isle?  
Such have we, but unvaried in its style;  
No tales of Runagates fresh landed,  
whence 61  
And wherefore fugitive or on what pre-  
tence;  
Of feasts, or scandal, eddying like the  
wind  
Most restlessly alive when most confined.  
Ask not of me, whose tongue can best  
appease 65  
The mighty tumults of the HOUSE OF  
KEYS;  
The last year's cup whose Ram or Heifer  
gained,  
What slopes are planted, or what mosses  
drained:  
An eye of fancy only can I cast  
On that proud pageant now at hand or  
past, 70  
When full five hundred boats in trim  
array,  
With nets and sails outspread and stream-  
ers gay,

And chanted hymns and stiller voice of  
prayer,  
For the old Manx-harvest to the Deep  
repair,  
Soon as the herring-shoals at distance  
shine 75  
Like beds of moonlight shifting on the  
brine.

Mona from our Abode is daily seen,  
But with a wilderness of waves between;  
And by conjecture only can we speak  
Of aught transacted there in bay or creek;  
No tidings reach us thence from town or  
field, 81  
Only faint news her mountain-sunbeams  
yield,  
And some we gather from the misty air,  
And some the hovering clouds, our tele-  
graph, declare.  
But these poetic mysteries I withhold; 85  
For Fancy-hath her fits both hot and cold,  
And should the colder fit with You be on  
When You might read, my credit would  
be gone.

Let more substantial themes the pen  
engage,  
And nearer interests culled from the  
opening stage 90  
Of our migration.—Ere the welcome dawn  
Had from the east her silver star with-  
drawn,  
The Wain stood ready, at our Cottage-  
door,  
Thoughtfully freighted with a various  
store;  
And long or ere the uprising of the Sun  
O'er dew-damped dust our journey was  
begun, 95  
A needful journey, under favouring skies,  
Through peopled Vales; yet something  
in the guise  
Of those old Patriarchs when from well  
to well  
They roamed through Wastes where now  
the tented Arabs dwell. 100  
Say first, to whom did we the charge  
confide,  
Who promptly undertook the Wain to  
guide

Up many a sharply-twining road and  
 down,  
 And over many a wide hill's craggy  
 crown,  
 Through the quick turns of many a hollow  
 nook, 105  
 And the rough bed of many an unbridged  
 brook?  
 A blooming Lass—who in her better hand  
 Bore a light switch, her sceptre of com-  
 mand  
 When, yet a slender Girl, she often led,  
 Skilful and bold, the horse and burthen-  
 ed sled<sup>1</sup> 110  
 From the peat-yielding Moss on Gowdar's  
 head.  
 What could go wrong with such a Cha-  
 rrioteer  
 For goods and chattels, or those Infants  
 dear,  
 A Pair who smilingly sat side by side,  
 Our hope confirming that the salt-sea  
 tide, 115  
 Whose free embraces we were bound to  
 seek,  
 Would their lost strength restore and  
 freshen the pale cheek?  
 Such hope did either Parent entertain  
 Pacing behind along the silent lane.

Blithe hopes and happy musings soon  
 took flight, 120  
 For lo! an uncouth melancholy sight—  
 On a green bank a creature stood forlorn  
 Just half protruded to the light of morn,  
 Its hinder part concealed by hedge-row  
 thorn.  
 The Figure called to mind a beast of prey  
 Stript of its frightful powers by slow  
 decay, 126  
 And, though no longer upon rapine bent,  
 Dim memory keeping of its old intent.  
 We started, looked again with anxious  
 eyes,  
 And in that griesly object recognise 130  
 The Curate's Dog—his long-tried friend,  
 for they,  
 As well we knew, together had grown  
 grey.

The Master died, his drooping servant's  
 grief  
 Found at the Widow's feet some sad  
 relief:  
 Yet still he lived in pining discontent,  
 Sadness which no indulgence could pre-  
 vent; 136  
 Hence whole day wanderings, broken  
 nightly sleeps  
 And lonesome watch that out of doors he  
 keeps;  
 Not oftentimes, I trust, as we, poor brute!  
 Espied him on his legs sustained, blank,  
 mute, 140  
 And of all visible motion destitute,  
 So that the very heaving of his breath  
 Seemed stopt, though by some other  
 power than death.  
 Long as we gazed upon the form and face,  
 A mild domestic pity kept its place, 145  
 Unscared by thronging fancies of strange  
 hue  
 That haunted us in spite of what we  
 knew.  
 Even now I sometimes think of him as lost  
 In second-sight appearances, or crost  
 By spectral shapes of guilt, or to the  
 ground, 150  
 On which he stood, by spells unnatural  
 bound,  
 Like a gaunt shaggy Porter forced to wait  
 In days of old romance at Archimago's  
 gate.

Advancing Summer, Nature's law ful-  
 filled, 154  
 The choristers in every grove had stilled;  
 But we, we lacked not music of our own,  
 For lightsome Fanny had thus early  
 thrown,  
 Mid the gay prattle of those infant  
 tongues,  
 Some notes prelusive, from the round of  
 songs  
 With which, more zealous than the live-  
 liest bird 160  
 That in wild Arden's brakes was ever heard,  
 Her work and her work's partners she  
 can cheer,  
 The whole day long, and all days of the  
 year.

<sup>1</sup> A local word for sledge.

Thus gladdened from our own dear  
 Vale we pass  
 And soon approach Diana's Looking-glass!  
 To Loughrigg-tarn, round clear and bright  
 as heaven, 166  
 Such name Italian fancy would have  
 given,  
 Ere on its banks the few grey cabins rose  
 That yet disturb not its concealed repose  
 More than the feeblest wind that idly  
 blows. 170

Ah, Beaumont! when an opening in  
 the road  
 Stopped me at once by charm of what it  
 showed,  
 The encircling region vividly exprest  
 Within the mirror's depth, a world at  
 rest—  
 Sky streaked with purple, grove and  
 craggy *bield*<sup>1</sup>, 175  
 And the smooth green of many a pen-  
 dent field,  
 And, quieted and soothed, a torrent  
 small,  
 A little daring would-be waterfall,  
 One chimney smoking and its azure  
 wreath,  
 Associate all in the calm Pool beneath,  
 With here and there a faint imperfect  
 gleam 181  
 Of water-lilies veiled in misty steam—  
 What wonder at this hour of stillness  
 deep,  
 A shadowy link 'tween wakefulness and  
 sleep,  
 When Nature's self, amid such blending,  
 seems 185  
 To render visible her own soft dreams,  
 If, mixed with what appeared of rock,  
 lawn, wood,  
 Fondly embosomed in the tranquil flood,  
 A glimpse I caught of that Abode, by  
 Thee  
 Designed to rise in humble privacy, 190  
 A lowly Dwelling, here to be outspread,  
 Like a small Hamlet, with its bashful  
 head

<sup>1</sup> A word common in the country, signifying  
 shelter, as in Scotland.

Half hid in native trees. Alas 'tis not,  
 Nor ever was; I sighed, and left the spot  
 Unconscious of its own untoward lot, 195  
 And thought in silence, with regret too  
 keen,  
 Of unexperienced joys that might have  
 been;  
 Of neighbourhood and intermingling arts,  
 And golden summer days uniting cheer-  
 ful hearts.  
 But time, irrevocable time, is flown, 200  
 And let us utter thanks for blessings  
 sown  
 And reaped—what hath been, and what  
 is, our own.

Not far we travelled ere a shout of glee,  
 Startling us all, dispersed my reverie;  
 Such shout as many a sportive echo meet-  
 ing 205  
 Oft-times from Alpine *chalets* sends a  
 greeting.  
 Whence the blithe hail? behold a Peasant  
 stand  
 On high, a kerchief waving in her hand!  
 Not unexpectant that by early day  
 Our little Band would thrid this moun-  
 tain-way, 210  
 Before her cottage on the bright hill-side  
 She hath advanced with hope to be de-  
 scried.  
 Right gladly answering signals we dis-  
 played,  
 Moving along a tract of morning shade,  
 And vocal wishes sent of like good will  
 To our kind Friend high on the sunny  
 hill— 216  
 Luminous region, fair as if the prime  
 Were tempting all astrid to look aloft or  
 climb;  
 Only the centre of the shining cot  
 With door left open makes a gloomy spot,  
 Emblem of those dark corners sometimes  
 found 221  
 Within the happiest breast on earthly  
 ground.

Rich prospect left behind of stream  
 and vale,  
 And mountain-tops, a barren ridge we  
 scale;

Descend and reach, in Yewdale's depths,  
 a plain 225  
 With haycocks studded, striped with  
 yellowing grain—  
 An area level as a Lake and spread  
 Under a rock too steep for man to tread,  
 Where sheltered from the north and bleak  
 north-west  
 Aloft the Raven hangs a visible nest, 230  
 Fearless of all assaults that would her  
 brood molest.  
 Hot sunbeams fill the steaming vale; but  
 hark,  
 At our approach, a jealous watch-dog's  
 bark,  
 Noise that brings forth no liveried Page  
 of state,  
 But the whole household, that our coming  
 wait. 235  
 With Young and Old warm greetings we  
 exchange,  
 And jocund smiles, and toward the lowly  
 Grange  
 Press forward by the teasing dogs un-  
 scared.  
 Entering, we find the morning meal pre-  
 pared:  
 So down we sit, though not till each had  
 cast 240  
 Pleased looks around the delicate repast—  
 Rich cream, and snow-white eggs fresh  
 from the nest,  
 With amber honey from the mountain's  
 breast;  
 Strawberries from lane or woodland, offer-  
 ing wild 244  
 Of children's industry, in hillocks piled;  
 Cakes for the nonce, and butter fit to lie  
 Upon a lordly dish; frank hospitality  
 Where simple art with bounteous nature  
 vied,  
 And cottage comfort shunned not seemly  
 pride.

Kind Hostess! Handmaid also of the  
 feast, 250  
 If thou be lovelier than the kindling East,  
 Words by thy presence unrestrained may  
 speak  
 Of a perpetual dawn from brow and  
 cheek

Instinct with light whose sweetest pro-  
 mise lies,  
 Never retiring, in thy large dark eyes, 255  
 Dark but to every gentle feeling true,  
 As if their lustre flowed from ether's  
 purest blue.

Let me not ask what tears may have  
 been wept  
 By those bright eyes, what weary vigils  
 kept,  
 Beside that hearth what sighs may have  
 been heaved 260  
 Forwounds inflicted, nor what toil relieved  
 By fortitude and patience, and the grace  
 Of heaven in pity visiting the place.  
 Not unadvisedly those secret springs  
 I leave unsearched: enough that memory  
 clings, 265  
 Here as elsewhere, to notices that make  
 Their own significance for hearts awake,  
 To rural incidents, whose genial powers  
 Filled with delight three summer morn-  
 ing hours.

More could my pen report of grave or gay  
 That through our gipsy travel cheered the  
 way; 271  
 But, bursting forth above the waves, the  
 Sun  
 Laughs at my pains, and seems to say,  
 "Be done."  
 Yet, Beaumont, thou wilt not, I trust,  
 reprove  
 This humble offering made by Truth to  
 Love, 275  
 Nor chide the Muse that stooped to break  
 a spell  
 Which might have else been on me yet:—

FAREWELL.

UPON PERUSING THE FOREGOING  
 EPISTLE THIRTY YEARS AFTER  
 ITS COMPOSITION.

[Composed 1811.—Published: vol. of 1842.]

Soon did the Almighty Giver of all rest  
 Take those dear young Ones to a fearless  
 nest;  
 And in Death's arms has long reposed the  
 Friend  
 For whom this simple Register was  
 penned.

Thanks to the moth that spared it for  
 our eyes; 5  
 And Strangers even the slighted Scroll  
 may prize,  
 Moved by the touch of kindred sym-  
 pathies.  
 For—save the calm repentance sheds o'er  
 strife  
 Raised by remembrances of misused life,  
 The light from past endeavours purely  
 willed 10  
 And by Heaven's favour happily fulfilled;  
 Save hope that we, yet bound to Earth,  
 may share  
 The joys of the Departed—what so fair  
 As blameless pleasure, not without some  
 tears,  
 Reviewed through Love's transparent veil  
 of years? 15

*Note.*—LOUGHBRIGG TARN, alluded to in the foregoing Epistle, resembles, though much smaller in compass, the Lake Nemi, or *Speculum Dianæ* as it is often called, not only in its clear waters and circular form, and the beauty immediately surrounding it, but also as being overlooked by the eminence of Langdale Pikes as Lake Nemi is by that of Monte Caelo. Since this Epistle was written Loughbrigg Tarn has lost much of its beauty by the felling of many natural clumps of wood, relics of the old forest, particularly upon the farm called "The Oaks," from the abundance of that tree which grew there.

It is to be regretted, upon public grounds, that Sir George Beaumont did not carry into effect his intention of constructing here a Summer Retreat in the style I have described; as his taste would have set an example how buildings, with all the accommodations modern society requires, might be introduced even into the most secluded parts of this country without injuring their native character. The design was not abandoned from failure of inclination on his part, but in consequence of local untowardness which need not be particularised.

## II.

GOLD AND SILVER FISHES IN A  
VASE.

[Composed 1822.—Published 1835.]

THE soaring lark is blest as proud  
 When at heaven's gate she sings;  
 The roving bee proclaims aloud  
 Her flight by vocal wings;

While Ye, in lasting durance pent, 5  
 Your silent lives employ  
 For something more than dull content,  
 Though haply less than joy.

Yet might your glassy prison seem 10  
 A place where joy is known,  
 Where golden flash and silver gleam  
 Have meanings of their own;  
 While, high and low, and all about,  
 Your motions, glittering Elves!  
 Ye weave—no danger from without, 15  
 And peace among yourselves.

Type of a sunny human breast  
 Is your transparent cell;  
 Where Fear is but a transient guest,  
 No sullen Humours dwell; 20  
 Where, sensitive of every ray  
 That smites this tiny sea,  
 Your scaly panoplies repay  
 The loan with usury.

How beautiful!—Yet none knows why 25  
 This ever-graceful change,  
 Renewed—renewed incessantly—  
 Within your quiet range.  
 Is it that ye with conscious skill  
 For mutual pleasure glide; 30  
 And sometimes, not without your will,  
 Are dwarfed, or magnified?

Fays, Genii of gigantic size!  
 And now, in twilight dim,  
 Clustering like constellated eyes 35  
 In wings of Cherubim,  
 When the fierce orbs abate their glare;—  
 Whate'er your forms express,  
 Whate'er ye seem, whate'er ye are—  
 All leads to gentleness. 40

Cold though your nature be, 'tis pure;  
 Your birthright is a fence  
 From all that haughtier kinds endure  
 Through tyranny of sense.  
 Ah! not alone by colours bright 45  
 Are Ye to heaven allied,  
 When, like essential Forms of light,  
 Ye mingle, or divide.

For day-dreams soft as e'er beguiled  
 Day-thoughts while limbs repose; 50  
 For moonlight fascinations mild,  
 Your gift, ere shutters close—

Accept, mute Captives! thanks and  
praise;

And may this tribute prove  
That gentle admirations raise  
Delight resembling love.

III.

LIBERTY.

SEQUEL TO THE PRECEDING.

Addressed to a friend; the gold and silver fishes  
having been removed to a pool in the pleasure-  
ground of Rydal Mount.

"The liberty of a people consists in being govern-  
ed by laws which they have made for them-  
selves, under whatever form it be of govern-  
ment. The liberty of a private man, in being  
master of his own time and actions, as far  
as may consist with the laws of God and of his  
country. Of this latter we are here to dis-  
course."—COWLEY.

[Composed 1829.—Published 1835.]

THOSE breathing Tokens of your kind  
regard,

(Suspect not, Anna, that their fate is  
hard;

Not soon does aught to which mild fancies  
cling

In lonely spots, become a slighted thing;)  
Those silent Inmates now no longer share,

Nor do they need, our hospitable care, 6  
Removed in kindness from their glassy  
Cell

To the fresh waters of a living Well—  
An elfin pool so sheltered that its rest

No winds disturb; the mirror of whose  
breast 10

Is smooth as clear, save where with dim-  
ples small

A fly may settle, or a blossom fall.  
—There swims, of blazing sun and beating

shower  
Fearless (but how obscured!) the golden

Power,  
That from his bauble prison used to cast

Gleams by the richest jewel unsurpast; 16  
And near him, darkling like a sullen  
Gnome,

The silver Tenant of the crystal dome;

Dissevered both from all the mysteries  
Of hue and altering shape that charmed  
all eyes. 20

Alas! they pined, they languished while  
they shone;

And, if not so, what matters beauty gone  
And admiration lost, by change of place

That brings to the inward creature no  
disgrace?

But if the change restore his birthright,  
then, 25

Whate'er the difference, boundless is the  
gain.

Who can divine what impulses from God  
Reach the caged lark, within a town-  
abode,

From his poor inch or two of daisied sod?  
O yield him back his privilege!—No sea 30

Swells like the bosom of a man set free;  
A wilderness is rich with liberty.

Roll on, ye spouting whales, who die or  
keep

Your independence in the fathomless  
Deep!

Spread, tiny nautilus, the living sail; 35  
Dive, at thy choice, or brave the freshening  
gale!

If unproved the ambitious eagle mount  
Sunward to seek the daylight in its fount,

Bays, gulfs, and ocean's Indian width,  
shall be,

Till the world perishes, a field for thee! 40

While musing here I sit in shadow cool,  
And watch these mute Companions, in  
the pool,

(Among reflected boughs of leafy trees)  
By glimpses caught—disporting at their

ease, 45  
Enlivened, braced, by hardy luxuries,  
I ask what warrant fixed them (like a  
spell

Of witchcraft fixed them) in the crystal  
cell;

To wheel with languid motion round and  
round,

Beautiful, yet in mournful durance bound.  
Their peace, perhaps, our lightest footfall

marred; 50  
On their quick sense our sweetest music  
jarred;

And whither could they dart, if seized  
with fear?  
No sheltering stone, no tangled root was  
near.  
When fire or taper ceased to cheer the  
room,  
They wore away the night in starless  
gloom; 55  
And when the sun first dawned upon the  
streams,  
How faint their portion of his vital beams!  
Thus, and unable to complain, they fared,  
While not one joy of ours by them was  
shared.

Is there a cherished bird (I venture  
now 60  
To snatch a sprig from Chaucer's reverend  
brow)—  
Is there a brilliant fondling of the cage,  
Though sure of plaudits on his costly  
stage,  
Though fed with dainties from the snow-  
white hand  
Of a kind mistress, fairest of the land, 65  
But gladly would escape; and, if need  
were,  
Scatter the colours from the plumes that  
bear  
The emancipated captive through blithe  
air  
Into strange woods, where he at large  
may live  
On best or worst which they and Nature  
give? 70  
The beetle loves his unpretending track,  
The snail the house he carries on his  
back;  
The far-fetched worm with pleasure would  
disown  
The bed we give him, though of softest  
down;  
A noble instinct; in all kinds the same, 75  
All ranks! What Sovereign, worthy of  
the name,  
If doomed to breathe against his lawful  
will  
An element that flatters him—to kill,  
But would rejoice to barter outward show  
For the least boon that freedom can be-  
stow? 80

But most the Bard is true to inborn  
right,  
Lark of the dawn, and Philomel of night,  
Exults in freedom, can with rapture vouch  
For the dear blessings of a lowly couch,  
A natural meal—days, months, from  
Nature's hand; 85  
Time, place, and business, all at his com-  
mand!—  
Who bends to happier duties, who more  
wise  
Than the industrious Poet, taught to  
prize,  
Above all grandeur, a pure life uncrossed  
By cares in which simplicity is lost? 90  
That life—the flowery path that winds by  
stealth—  
Which Horace needed for his spirit's  
health;  
Sighed for, in heart and genius, overcome  
By noise and strife, and questions wearisome,  
And the vain splendours of Imperial  
Rome?— 95  
Let easy mirth his social hours inspire,  
And fiction animate his sportive lyre,  
Attuned to verse that, crowning light  
Distress  
With garlands, cheats her into happiness;  
Give *me* the humblest note of those sad  
strains 100  
Drawn forth by pressure of his gilded  
chains,  
As a chance-sunbeam from his memory  
fell  
Upon the Sabine farm he loved so well;  
Or when the prattle of Bandusia's spring  
Haunted his ear—he only listening— 105  
He proud to please, above all rivals, fit  
To win the palm of gaiety and wit;  
He, doubt not, with involuntary dread,  
Shrinking from each new favour to be  
shed,  
By the world's Ruler, on his honoured  
head! 110

In a deep vision's intellectual scene,  
Such earnest longings and regrets as keen  
Depressed the melancholy Cowley, laid  
Under a fancied yew-tree's luckless  
shade;

A doleful bower for penitential song, 115  
Where Man and Muse complained of  
mutual wrong;

While Cam's ideal current glided by,  
And antique towers nodded their fore-  
heads high,

Citadels dear to studious privacy.

But Fortune, who had long been used to  
sport 120

With this tried Servant of a thankless  
Court,

Relenting met his wishes; and to you

The remnant of his days at least was true;

You, whom, though long deserted, he  
loved best;

You, Muses, books, fields, liberty, and rest!

Far happier they who, fixing hope and  
aim 126

On the humanities of peaceful fame,  
Enter betimes with more than martial fire  
The generous course, aspire, and still  
aspire;

Upheld by warnings heeded not too late  
Stifle the contradictions of their fate, 131

And to one purpose cleave, their Being's  
godlike mate!

Thus, gifted Friend, but with the placid  
brow

That woman ne'er should forfeit, keep *thy*  
vow;

With modest scorn reject whate'er would  
blind 135

The ethereal eyesight, cramp the winged  
mind!

Then, with a blessing granted from above  
To every act, word, thought, and look of love,  
Life's book for Thee may lie unclosed, till  
age

Shall with a thankful tear bedrop its latest  
page<sup>1</sup>. 140

<sup>1</sup> There is now, alas! no possibility of the anticipation, with which the above Epistle concludes, being realised: nor were the verses ever seen by the Individual for whom they were intended. She accompanied her husband, the Rev. Wm. Fletcher, to India, and died of cholera, at the age of thirty-two or thirty-three years, on her way from Shalapore to Bombay, deeply lamented by all who knew her.

Her enthusiasm was ardent, her piety stead-

## IV.

POOR ROBIN<sup>2</sup>.

[Composed March, 1840.—Published: vol. of 1842.]

Now when the primrose makes a splendid  
show,

And lilies face the March-winds in full  
blossom,

And humbler growths as moved with one  
desire

Put on, to welcome spring, their best  
attire,

Poor Robin is yet flowerless; but how  
gay 5

With his red stalks upon this sunny day!  
And, as his tufts of leaves he spreads,

content

With a hard bed and scanty nourishment,  
Mixed with the green, some shine not  
lacking power

To rival summer's brightest scarlet flower;  
And flowers they well might seem to  
passers-by 11

If looked at only with a careless eye;  
Flowers—or a richer produce (did it suit

The season) sprinklings of ripe strawberry  
fruit.

But while a thousand pleasures come  
unsought, 15

Why fix upon his wealth or want a  
thought?

Is the string touched in prelude to a lay  
Of pretty fancies that would round him

play

When all the world acknowledged elfin  
sway?

fast; and her great talents would have enabled her to be eminently useful in the difficult path of life to which she had been called. The opinion she entertained of her own performances, given to the world under her maiden name, Jewsbury, was modest and humble, and, indeed, far below their merits; as is often the case with those who are making trial of their powers, with a hope to discover what they are best fitted for. In one quality, viz. quickness in the motions of her mind, she had, within the range of the Author's acquaintance, no equal.

<sup>2</sup> The small wild Geranium known by that term.

Or does it suit our humour to commend 20  
 Poor Robin as a sure and crafty friend,  
 Whose practice teaches, spite of names to  
 show

Bright colours whether they deceive or  
 no?—

Nay, we would simply praise the free  
 good-will

With which, though slighted, he, on naked  
 hill 25

Or in warm valley, seeks his part to fill;  
 Cheerful alike if bare of flowers as now,  
 Or when his tiny gems shall deck his  
 brow:

Yet more, we wish that men by men  
 despised,

And such as lift their foreheads over-  
 prized, 30

Should sometimes think, where'er they  
 chance to spy

This child of Nature's own humility,  
 What recompense is kept in store or left  
 For all that seem neglected or bereft;  
 With what nice care equivalents are  
 given, 35

How just, how bountiful, the hand of  
 Heaven.

## V.

## THE GLEANER.

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE.

[Composed 1823.—Published, as "The Country  
 Girl," 1829 (*The Keepsake*); ed. 1882.]

THAT happy gleam of vernal eyes,  
 Those locks from summer's golden skies,

That o'er thy brow are shed;  
 That cheek—a kindling of the morn,

That lip—a rose-bud from the thorn, 5  
 I saw; and Fancy sped

To scenes Arcadian, whispering, through  
 soft air,

Of bliss that grows without a care,  
 And happiness that never flies—

(How can it where love never dies?) 10  
 Whispering of promise, where no blight  
 Can reach the innocent delight;

Where pity, to the mind conveyed  
 In pleasure, is the darkest shade

That Time, unwrinkled grandsire, flings  
 From his smoothly gliding wings. 16

What mortal form, what earthly face  
 Inspired the pencil, lines to trace,  
 And mingle colours, that should breed  
 Such rapture, nor want power to feed; 20  
 For had thy charge been idle flowers,  
 Fair Damsel! o'er my captive mind,  
 To truth and sober reason blind,  
 Mid that soft air, those long-lost bowers,  
 The sweet illusion might have hung, for  
 hours. 25

Thanks to this tell-tale sheaf of corn,  
 That touchingly bespeaks thee born  
 Life's daily tasks with them to share  
 Who, whether from their lowly bed  
 They rise, or rest the weary head, 30  
 Ponder the blessing they entreat  
 From Heaven, and *feel* what they repeat,  
 While they give utterance to the prayer  
 That asks for daily bread.

## VI.

## TO A REDBREAST

(IN SICKNESS).

[Composed ?.—Published: vol. of 1842.]

STAY, little cheerful Robin! stay,  
 And at my casement sing,  
 Though it should prove a farewell lay  
 And this our parting spring.

Though I, alas! may ne'er enjoy 5  
 The promise in thy song;

A charm, *that* thought can not destroy,  
 Doth to thy strain belong.

Methinks that in my dying hour  
 Thy song would still be dear, 10  
 And with a more than earthly power  
 My passing Spirit cheer.

Then, little Bird, this boon confer,  
 Come, and my requiem sing,  
 Nor fail to be the harbinger 15  
 Of everlasting Spring.

S. H.

## VII.

[Composed 1846.—Published 1850.]

I KNOW an aged Man constrained to dwell  
 In a large house of public charity,  
 Where he abides, as in a Prisoner's cell,  
 With numbers near, alas! no company.

When he could creep about, at will,  
though poor 5  
And forced to live on alms, this old Man  
fed

A Redbreast, one that to his cottage door  
Came not, but in a lane partook his bread.

There, at the root of one particular tree,  
An easy seat this worn-out Labourer  
found 10

While Robin pecked the crumbs upon his  
knee

Laid one by one, or scattered on the  
ground.

Dear intercourse was theirs, day after  
day;

What signs of mutual gladness when they  
met!

Think of their common peace, their sim-  
ple play, 15

The parting moment and its fond regret.

Months passed in love that failed not to  
fulfil,

In spite of season's change, its own  
demand,

By fluttering pinions here and busy bill;  
There by caresses from a tremulous hand.

Thus in the chosen spot a tie so strong 21  
Was formed between the solitary pair,

That when his fate had housed him 'mid  
a throng

The Captive shunned all converse proffered there.

Wife, children, kindred, they were dead  
and gone; 25

But, if no evil hap his wishes crossed,  
One living Stay was left, and on that  
one

Some recompense for all that he had lost.

O that the good old Man had power to  
prove,

By message sent through air or visible  
token, 30

That still he loves the Bird, and still  
must love;

That friendship lasts though fellowship  
is broken!

VIII.

SONNET.

TO AN OCTOGENARIAN.

[Composed 1846.—Published 1850.]

AFFECTIONS lose their object; Time brings  
forth

No successors; and, lodged in memory,  
If love exist no longer, it must die,—

Wanting accustomed food, must pass  
from earth,

Or never hope to reach a second birth. 5  
This sad belief, the happiest that is left

To thousands, share not Thou; howe'er  
bereft,

Scorned, or neglected, fear not such a  
dearth.

Though poor and destitute of friends thou  
art,

Perhaps the sole survivor of thy race, 10  
One to whom Heaven assigns that mourn-  
ful part

The utmost solitude of age to face,  
Still shall be left some corner of the heart

Where Love for living Thing can find a  
place.

IX.

FLOATING ISLAND.

These lines are by the Author of the Address to  
the Wind, &c., published heretofore along with  
my poems. Those to a Redbreast are by a de-  
ceased female Relative.

[Composed ?.—Published: vol. of 1842.]

HARMONIOUS Powers with Nature work  
On sky, earth, river, lake and sea;

Sunshine and cloud, whirlwind and breeze,  
All in one duteous task agree.

Once did I see a slip of earth 5  
(By throbbing waves long undermined)

Loosed from its hold; how, no one knew,  
But all might see it float, obedient to the  
wind;

Might see it, from the mossy shore  
Dissevered, float upon the Lake, 10

Float with its crest of trees adorned  
On which the warbling birds their pas-  
time take.

Food, shelter, safety, there they find;  
There berries ripen, flowerets bloom;  
There insects live their lives, and die; 15  
A peopled world it is; in size a tiny  
room.

And thus through many seasons' space  
This little Island may survive;  
But Nature, though we mark her not,  
Will take away, may cease to give. 20

Perchance when you are wandering forth  
Upon some vacant sunny day,  
Without an object, hope, or fear,  
Thither your eyes may turn—the Isle is  
passed away;

Buried beneath the glittering Lake, 25  
Its place no longer to be found;  
Yet the lost fragments shall remain  
To fertilise some other ground.

D. W.

### X.

[Composed ?.—Published 1850.]

How beautiful the Queen of Night, on  
high

Her way pursuing among scattered clouds,  
Where, ever and anon, her head she  
shrouds

Hidden from view in dense obscurity.  
But look, and to the watchful eye 5  
A brightening edge will indicate that  
soon

We shall behold the struggling Moon  
Break forth,—again to walk the clear blue  
sky.

### XI.

"Late, late yestreen I saw the new moone  
Wl' the auld moone in hir arme."

*Ballad of Sir Patrick Spence,  
Percy's Reliques.*

[Composed 1826.—Published 1827.]

ONCE I could hail (howe'er serene the  
sky)

The Moon re-entering her monthly round,  
No faculty yet given me to espy  
The dusky Shape within her arms im-  
bound,

That thin memento of effulgence lost 5  
Which some have named her Prede-  
cessor's ghost.

Young, like the Crescent that above me  
shone,

Nought I perceived within it dull or dim;  
All that appeared was suitable to One  
Whose fancy had a thousand fields to  
skim; 10

To expectations spreading with wild  
growth,  
And hope that kept with me her plighted  
troth:

I saw (ambition quickening at the view)  
A silver boat launched on a boundless  
flood;

A pearly crest, like Dian's when it threw  
Its brightest splendour round a leafy  
wood; 16  
But not a hint from under-ground, no  
sign

Fit for the glimmering brow of Proser-  
pine.

Or was it Dian's self that seemed to  
move

Before me?—nothing blemished the fair  
sight; 20

On her I looked whom jocund Fairies  
love,

Cynthia, who puts the *little* stars to  
flight,

And by that thinning magnifies the great,  
For exaltation of her sovereign state.

And when I learned to mark the spectral  
Shape 25

As each new Moon obeyed the call of  
Time,

If gloom fell on me, swift was my es-  
cape;

Such happy privilege hath life's gay  
Prime,

To see or not to see, as best may please  
A buoyant Spirit, and a heart at ease. 30

Now, dazzling Stranger! when thou  
meet'st my glance,

Thy dark Associate ever I discern;  
Emblem of thoughts too eager to advance

While I salute my joys, thoughts sad or stern ;

Shades of past bliss, or phantoms that, to gain

Their fill of promised lustre, wait in vain. 35

So changes mortal Life with fleeting years ;

A mournful change, should Reason fail to bring

The timely insight that can temper fears, And from vicissitude remove its sting ; 40

While Faith aspires to seats in that domain

Where joys are perfect—neither wax nor wane.

## XII.

### TO THE LADY FLEMING,

ON SEEING THE FOUNDATION PREPARING FOR THE ERECTION OF RYDAL CHAPEL, WESTMORELAND.

[Composed 1823.—Published 1827.]

#### I.

BLEST is this Isle—our native Land ; Where battlement and moated gate

Are objects only for the hand Of hoary Time to decorate ;

Where shady hamlet, town that breathes Its busy smoke in social wreaths, 6

No rampart's stern defence require, Nought but the heaven-directed spire,

And steeple tower (with pealing bells Far-heard)—our only citadels. 10

#### II.

O Lady! from a noble line

Of chieftains sprung, who stoutly bore

The spear, yet gave to works divine

A bounteous help in days of yore,

(As records mouldering in the Dell 15

Of Nightshade<sup>1</sup> haply yet may tell ; )

Thee kindred aspirations moved

To build, within a vale beloved,

For Him upon whose high behests

All peace depends, all safety rests. 20

<sup>1</sup> Bekangs Ghyll—or the dell of Nightshade—in which stands St. Mary's Abbey in Low Furness.

#### III.

How fondly will the woods embrace

This daughter of thy pious care,

Lifting her front with modest grace

To make a fair recess more fair ;

And to exalt the passing hour ; 25

Or soothe it with a healing power

Drawn from the Sacrifice fulfilled,

Before this rugged soil was tilled,

Or human habitation rose

To interrupt the deep repose ! 30

#### IV.

Well may the villagers rejoice !

Nor heat, nor cold, nor weary ways,

Will be a hindrance to the voice

That would unite in prayer and praise ;

More duly shall wild wandering Youth

Receive the curb of sacred truth, 36

Shall tottering Age, bent earthward, hear

The Promise, with uplifted ear ;

And all shall welcome the new ray

Imparted to their sabbath-day. 40

#### V.

Nor deem the Poet's hope misplaced,

His fancy cheated—that can see

A shade upon the future cast,

Of time's pathetic sanctity ;

Can hear the monitory clock 45

Sound o'er the lake with gentle shock

At evening, when the ground beneath

Is ruffled o'er with cells of death ;

Where happy generations lie,

Here tutored for eternity. 50

#### VI.

Lives there a man whose sole delights

Are trivial pomp and city noise,

Hardening a heart that loathes or slights

What every natural heart enjoys ?

Who never caught a noon-tide dream 55

From murmur of a running stream ;

Could strip, for aught the prospect yields

To him, their verdure from the fields ;

And take the radiance from the clouds

In which the sun his setting shrouds. 60

## VII.

A soul so pitiously forlorn,  
 If such do on this earth abide,  
 May season apathy with scorn,  
 May turn indifference to pride;  
 And still be not unblest—compared 65  
 With him who grovels, self-debarred  
 From all that lies within the scope  
 Of holy faith and Christian hope;  
 Or, shipwrecked, kindles on the coast  
 False fires, that others may be lost. 70

## VIII.

Alas! that such perverted zeal  
 Should spread on Britain's favoured  
 ground!

That public order, private weal,  
 Should e'er have felt or feared a wound  
 From champions of the desperate law 75  
 Which from their own blind hearts they  
 draw;  
 Who tempt their reason to deny  
 God, whom their passions dare defy,  
 And boast that they alone are free  
 Who reach this dire extremity! 80

## IX.

But turn we from these "bold bad"  
 men;

The way, mild Lady! that hath led  
 Down to their "dark opprobrious den,"  
 Is all too rough for Thee to tread.  
 Softly as morning vapours glide 85  
 Down Rydal-cove from Fairfield's side,  
 Should move the tenor of *his* song  
 Who means to charity no wrong;  
 Whose offering gladly would accord  
 With this day's work, in thought and  
 word. 90

## X.

Heaven prosper it! may peace, and love,  
 And hope, and consolation, fall,  
 Through its meek influence, from above,  
 And penetrate the hearts of all;  
 All who, around the hallowed Fane, 95  
 Shall sojourn in this fair domain;  
 Grateful to Thee, while service pure,  
 And ancient ordinance, shall endure,  
 For opportunity bestowed 99  
 To kneel together, and adore their God!

## XIII.

## ON THE SAME OCCASION.

Oh! gather whencesoe'er ye safely may  
 The help which slackening Piety requires;  
 Nor deem that he perforce must go astray  
 Who treads upon the footmarks of his sires.

Our churches, invariably perhaps, stand east and west, but *why* is by few persons *exactly* known; nor, that the degree of deviation from *due* east often noticeable in the ancient ones was determined, in each particular case, by the point in the horizon, at which the sun rose upon the day of the saint to whom the church was dedicated. These observances of our ancestors, and the causes of them, are the subject of the following stanzas.

[Composed 1823.—Published 1827.]

WHEN in the antique age of bow and spear  
 And feudal rapine clothed with iron mail,  
 Came ministers of peace, intent to rear  
 The Mother Church in yon sequestered  
 vale;

Then, to her Patron Saint a previous rite 5  
 Resounded with deep swell and solemn  
 close,

Through unremitting vigils of the night,  
 Till from his couch the wished-for Sun  
 uprose.

He rose, and straight—as by divine com-  
 mand,

They, who had waited for that sign to trace  
 Their work's foundation, gave with care-  
 ful hand 11

To the high altar its determined place;

Mindful of Him Who in the Orient born  
 There lived, and on the cross His life re-  
 signed,

And Who, from out the regions of the  
 morn, 15

Issuing in pomp, shall come to judge  
 mankind.

So taught *their* creed;—nor failed the  
 eastern sky,

'Mid these more awful feelings, to infuse  
 The sweet and natural hopes that shall  
 not die,

Long as the sun his gladsome course  
 renews. 20

For us hath such prelusive vigil ceased ;  
Yet still we plant, like men of elder days  
Our Christian altar faithful to the east,  
Whence the tall window drinks the morn-  
ing rays ;

That obvious emblem giving to the eye 25  
Of meek devotion, which erewhile it gave,  
That symbol of the day-spring from on high,  
Triumphant o'er the darkness of the grave.

XIV.

THE HORN OF EGREMONT CASTLE.

[Composed 1806.—Published 1807.]

SEE the Brothers through the gateway  
Issued forth with old and young,  
To the Horn Sir Eustace pointed  
Which for ages there had hung.  
Horn it was which none could sound, 5  
No one upon living ground,  
Save He who came as rightful Heir  
To Egremont's Domains and Castle fair.

Heirs from times of earliest record  
Had the House of Lucie born, 10  
Who of right had held the Lordship  
Claimed by proof upon the Horn :  
Each at the appointed hour  
Tried the Horn,—it owned his power ;  
He was acknowledged : and the blast, 15  
Which good Sir Eustace sounded, was  
the last.

With his lance Sir Eustace pointed,  
And to Hubert thus said he,  
"What I speak this Horn shall witness  
For thy better memory. 20  
Hear, then, and neglect me not !  
At this time, and on this spot,  
The words are uttered from my heart,  
As my last earnest prayer ere we depart.

"On good service we are going 25  
Life to risk by sea and land,  
In which course if Christ our Saviour  
Do my sinful soul demand,  
Hither come thou back straightway,  
Hubert, if alive that day ; 30  
Return, and sound the Horn, that we  
May have a living House still left in thee !"

"Fear not," quickly answered Hubert ;  
"As I am thy Father's son,

What thou askest, noble Brother, 35  
With God's favour shall be done."  
So were both right well content :  
Forth they from the Castle went,  
And at the head of their Array  
To Palestine the Brothers took their way.

Side by side they fought (the Lucies 41  
Were a line for valour famed)  
And where'er their strokes alighted,  
There the Saracens were tamed.  
Whence, then, could it come—the  
thought— 45

By what evil spirit brought ?  
Oh ! can a brave Man wish to take  
His Brother's life, for Lands' and Castle's  
sake ?

"Sir !" the Ruffians said to Hubert,  
"Deep he lies in Jordan flood." 50  
Stricken by this ill assurance,  
Pale and trembling Hubert stood.  
"Take your earnings."—Oh ! that I  
Could have seen my Brother die !  
It was a pang that vexed him then ; 55  
And oft returned, again, and yet again.

Months passed on, and no Sir Eustace !  
Nor of him were tidings heard ;  
Wherefore, bold as day, the Murderer  
Back again to England steered. 60  
To his Castle Hubert sped ;  
Nothing has he now to dread.  
But silent and by stealth he came,  
And at an hour which nobody could name.

None could tell if it were night-time, 65  
Night or day, at even or morn ;  
No one's eye had seen him enter,  
No one's ear had heard the Horn.  
But bold Hubert lives in glee :  
Months and years went smilingly ; 70  
With plenty was his table spread ;  
And bright the Lady is who shares his bed.

Likewise he had sons and daughters ;  
And, as good men do, he sate  
At his board by these surrounded, 75  
Flourishing in fair estate.  
And while thus in open day  
Once he sate, as old books say,  
A blast was uttered from the Horn,  
Where by the Castle-gate it hung forlorn.

'Tis the breath of good Sir Eustace ! 81  
 He is come to claim his right :  
 Ancient castle, woods, and mountains  
 Hear the challenge with delight.  
 Hubert ! though the blast be blown 85  
 He is helpless and alone :  
 Thou hast a dungeon, speak the word !  
 And there he may be lodged, and thou  
     be Lord.

Speak !—astounded Hubert cannot ;  
 And, if power to speak he had,  
 All are daunted, all the household  
 Smitten to the heart, and sad.  
 'Tis Sir Eustace ; if it be  
 Living man, it must be he !  
 Thus Hubert thought in his dismay, 95  
 And by a postern-gate he slunk away.

Long, and long was he unheard of :  
 To his Brother then he came,  
 Made confession, asked forgiveness,  
 Asked it by a brother's name,  
 And by all the saints in heaven ; 100  
 And of Eustace was forgiven :  
 Then in a convent went to hide  
 His melancholy head, and there he died.

But Sir Eustace, whom good angels 105  
 Had preserved from murderers' hands,  
 And from Pagan chains had rescued,  
 Lived with honour on his lands.  
 Sons he had, saw sons of theirs :  
 And through ages, heirs of heirs, 110  
 A long posterity renowned,  
 Sounded the Horn which they alone could  
     sound.

## XV.

## GOODY BLAKE AND HARRY GILL.

## A TRUE STORY.

[Composed 1798.—Published 1798.]

OH ! what's the matter ? what's the  
     matter ?

What is't that ails young Harry Gill ?  
 That evermore his teeth they chatter,  
 Chatter, chatter, chatter still !  
 Of waistcoats Harry has no lack, 5  
 Good duffe grey, and flannel fine ;  
 He has a blanket on his back,  
 And coats enough to smother nine.

In March, December, and in July,  
 'Tis all the same with Harry Gill ; 10  
 The neighbours tell, and tell you truly,  
 His teeth they chatter, chatter still.  
 At night, at morning, and at noon,  
 'Tis all the same with Harry Gill ;  
 Beneath the sun, beneath the moon, 15  
 His teeth they chatter, chatter still !

Young Harry was a lusty drover,  
 And who so stout of limb as he ?  
 His cheeks were red as ruddy clover ;  
 His voice was like the voice of three. 20  
 Old Goody Blake was old and poor ;  
 Ill fed she was, and thinly clad ;  
 And any man who passed her door  
 Might see how poor a hut she had.

All day she spun in her poor dwelling : 25  
 And then her three hours' work at night,  
 Alas ! 'twas hardly worth the telling,  
 It would not pay for candle-light.  
 Remote from sheltered village-green,  
 On a hill's northern side she dwelt, 30  
 Where from sea-blasts the hawthorns  
     lean,  
 And hoary dews are slow to melt.

By the same fire to boil their pottage,  
 Two poor old Dames, as I have known,  
 Will often live in one small cottage ; 35  
 But she, poor Woman ! housed alone.  
 'Twas well enough, when summer came,  
 The long, warm, lightsome summer-day,  
 Then at her door the *canty* Dame  
 Would sit, as any linnet, gay. 40

But when the ice our streams did fetter,  
 Oh then how her old bones would shake !  
 You would have said, if you had met her,  
 'Twas a hard time for Goody Blake.  
 Her evenings then were dull and dead : 45  
 Sad case it was, as you may think,  
 For very cold to go to bed ;  
 And then for cold not sleep a wink.

O joy for her ! whene'er in winter  
 The winds at night had made a rout ; 50  
 And scattered many a lusty splinter  
 And many a rotten bough about.  
 Yet never had she, well or sick,  
 As every man who knew her says,  
 A pile beforehand, turf or stick, 55  
 Enough to warm her for three days.

Now, when the frost was past enduring,  
And made her poor old bones to ache,  
Could any thing be more alluring  
Than an old hedge to Goody Blake? 60  
And, now and then, it must be said,  
When her old bones were cold and chill,  
She left her fire, or left her bed,  
To seek the hedge of Harry Gill.

Now Harry he had long suspected 65  
This trespass of old Goody Blake;  
And vowed that she should be detected—  
That he on her would vengeance take.  
And oft from his warm fire he'd go,  
And to the fields his road would take; 70  
And there, at night, in frost and snow,  
He watched to seize old Goody Blake.

And once, behind a rick of barley,  
Thus looking out did Harry stand:  
The moon was full and shining clearly, 75  
And crisp with frost the stubble land.  
—He hears a noise—he's all awake—  
Again?—on tip-toe down the hill  
He softly creeps—'tis Goody Blake;  
She's at the hedge of Harry Gill! 80

Right glad was he when he beheld her:  
Stick after stick did Goody pull:  
He stood behind a bush of elder,  
Till she had filled her apron full.  
When with her load she turned about, 85  
The by-way back again to take;  
He started forward, with a shout,  
And sprang upon poor Goody Blake.

And fiercely by the arm he took her,  
And by the arm he held her fast, 90  
And fiercely by the arm he shook her,  
And cried, "I've caught you then at  
last!"

Then Goody, who had nothing said,  
Her bundle from her lap let fall;  
And, kneeling on the sticks, she prayed 95  
To God that is the judge of all.

She prayed, her withered hand uprearing,  
While Harry held her by the arm—  
"God! who art never out of hearing,  
O may he never more be warm!" 100  
The cold, cold moon above her head,  
Thus on her knees did Goody pray;  
Young Harry heard what she had said:  
And icy cold he turned away.

He went complaining all the morrow 105  
That he was cold and very chill:  
His face was gloom, his heart was sorrow,  
Alas! that day for Harry Gill!  
That day he wore a riding-coat,  
But not a whit the warmer he: 110  
Another was on Thursday brought,  
And ere the Sabbath he had three.

'Twas all in vain, a useless matter,  
And blankets were about him pinned;  
Yet still his jaws and teeth they clatter,  
Like a loose casement in the wind. 116  
And Harry's flesh it fell away;  
And all who see him say, 'tis plain,  
That, live as long as live he may,  
He never will be warm again. 120

No word to any man he utters,  
A-bed or up, to young or old;  
But ever to himself he mutters,  
"Poor Harry Gill is very cold."  
A-bed or up, by night or day; 125  
His teeth they chatter, chatter still.  
Now think, ye farmers all, I pray,  
Of Goody Blake and Harry Gill!

## XVI.

## PRELUDE.

PREFixed TO THE VOLUME ENTITLED  
"POEMS CHIEFLY OF EARLY AND  
LATE YEARS."

[Composed March, 1842.—Published: vol. of 1842.]

IN desultory walk through orchard  
grounds,  
Or some deep chestnut grove, oft have  
I paused  
The while a Thrush, urged rather than  
restrained  
By gusts of vernal storm, attuned his  
song  
To his own genial instincts; and was  
heard 5  
(Though not without some plaintive tones  
between)  
To utter, above showers of blossom swept  
From tossing boughs, the promise of a  
calm,  
Which the unsheltered traveller might  
receive

With thankful spirit. The descent, and  
 the wind 10  
 That seemed to play with it in love or  
 scorn,  
 Encouraged and endeared the strain of  
 words  
 That haply flowed from me, by fits of  
 silence  
 Impelled to livelier pace. But now, my  
 Book!  
 Charged with those lays, and others of  
 like mood, 15  
 Or loftier pitch if higher rose the theme,  
 Go, single—yet aspiring to be joined  
 With thy Forerunners that through many  
 a year  
 Have faithfully prepared each other's  
 way—  
 Go forth upon a mission best fulfilled 20  
 When and wherever, in this changeful  
 world,  
 Power hath been given to please for  
 higher ends  
 Than pleasure only; gladdening to pre-  
 pare  
 For wholesome sadness, troubling to re-  
 fine,  
 Calming to raise; and, by a sapient Art  
 Diffused through all the mysteries of our  
 Being, 26  
 Softening the toils and pains that have  
 not ceased  
 To cast their shadows on our mother Earth  
 Since the primeval doom. Such is the  
 grace  
 Which, though unsued for, fails not to  
 descend 30  
 With heavenly inspiration; such the aim  
 That Reason dictates; and, as even the  
 wish  
 Has virtue in it, why should hope to me  
 Be wanting that sometimes, where fancied  
 ills  
 Harass the mind and strip from off the  
 bowers 35  
 Of private life their natural pleasantness,  
 A Voice—devoted to the love whose seeds  
 Are sown in every human breast, to  
 beauty  
 Lodged within compass of the humblest  
 sight,

To cheerful intercourse with wood and  
 field, 40  
 And sympathy with man's substantial  
 griefs—  
 Will not be heard in vain? And in those  
 days  
 When unforeseen distress spreads far and  
 wide  
 Among a People mournfully cast down,  
 Or into anger roused by venal words 45  
 In recklessness flung out to overturn  
 The judgment, and divert the general  
 heart  
 From mutual good—some strain of thine,  
 my Book!  
 Caught at propitious intervals, may win  
 Listeners who not unwillingly admit 50  
 Kindly emotion tending to console  
 And reconcile; and both with young and  
 old  
 Exalt the sense of thoughtful gratitude  
 For benefits that still survive, by faith  
 In progress, under laws divine, main-  
 tained. 55  
 RYDAL MOUNT, March 26, 1842.

## XVII.

## TO A CHILD.

WRITTEN IN HER ALBUM.

[Composed 1834.—Published 1835.]

SMALL service is true service while it  
 lasts:  
 Of humblest Friends, bright Creature!  
 scorn not one:  
 The Daisy, by the shadow that it casts,  
 Protects the lingering dew-drop from the  
 Sun.

## XVIII. "

## LINES

WRITTEN IN THE ALBUM OF THE  
 COUNTESS OF LONSDALE.

[Composed November 5, 1834.—Published 1835.]

LADY! a Pen (perhaps with thy regard,  
 Among the Favoured, favoured not the  
 least)  
 Left, 'mid the Records of this Book  
 inscribed,

Deliberate traces, registers of thought  
 And feeling, suited to the place and time  
 That gave them birth:—months passed,  
 and still this hand, 6  
 That had not been too timid to imprint  
 Words which the virtues of thy Lord  
 inspired,  
 Was yet not bold enough to write of  
 Thee.  
 And why that scrupulous reserve? In  
 sooth 10  
 The blameless cause lay in the Theme  
 itself.  
 Flowers are there many that delight to  
 strive  
 With the sharp wind, and seem to court  
 the shower,  
 Yet are by nature careless of the sun  
 Whether he shine on them or not; and  
 some, 15  
 Where'er he moves along the unclouded  
 sky,  
 Turn a broad front full on his flattering  
 beams:  
 Others do rather from their notice shrink,  
 Loving the dewy shade,—a humble band,  
 Modest and sweet, a progeny of earth, 20  
 Congenial with thy mind and character,  
 High-born Augusta!

Witness, Towers and Groves!  
 And Thou, wild Stream, that giv'st the  
 honoured name  
 Of Lowther to this ancient Line, bear  
 witness  
 From thy most secret haunts; and ye  
 Parterres, 25  
 Which She is pleased and proud to call  
 her own,  
 Witness how oft upon my noble Friend  
 Mute offerings, tribute from an inward  
 sense  
 Of admiration and respectful love,  
 Have waited—till the affections could no  
 more 30  
 Endure that silence, and broke out in  
 song,  
 Snatches of music taken up and dropt  
 Like those self-solacing, those under,  
 notes  
 Trilled by the redbreast, when autumnal  
 leaves

Are thin upon the bough. Mine, only  
 mine, 35  
 The pleasure was, and no one heard the  
 praise,  
 Checked, in the moment of its issue,  
 checked  
 And reprehended, by a fancied blush  
 From the pure qualities that called it  
 forth.

Thus Virtue lives debarred from Vir-  
 tue's meed; 40  
 Thus, Lady, is retiredness a veil  
 That, while it only spreads a softening  
 charm  
 O'er features looked at by discerning  
 eyes,  
 Hides half their beauty from the common  
 gaze;  
 And thus, even on the exposed and  
 breezy hill 45  
 Of lofty station, female goodness walks,  
 When side by side with lunar gentleness,  
 As in a cloister. Yet the grateful Poor  
 (Such the immunities of low estate,  
 Plain Nature's enviable privilege, 50  
 Her sacred recompense for many wants)  
 Open their hearts before Thee, pouring  
 out  
 All that they think and feel, with tears  
 of joy;  
 And benedictions not unheard in hea-  
 ven:  
 And friend in the ear of friend, where  
 speech is free 55  
 To follow truth, is eloquent as they.

Then let the Book receive in these  
 prompt lines  
 A just memorial; and thine eyes consent  
 To read that they, who mark thy course,  
 behold  
 A life declining with the golden light 60  
 Of summer, in the season of sere leaves;  
 See cheerfulness undamped by stealing  
 Time;  
 See studied kindness flow with easy  
 stream,  
 Illustrated with inborn courtesy;  
 And an habitual disregard of self 65  
 Balanced by vigilance for others' weal.

And shall the Verse not tell of lighter gifts  
 With these ennobling attributes con-  
     joined  
 And blended, in peculiar harmony,  
 By Youth's surviving spirit? What agile  
     grace! 70  
 A nymph-like liberty, in nymph-like  
     form,  
 Beheld with wonder; whether floor or  
     path  
 Thou tread; or sweep—borne on the  
     managed steed—  
 Fleet as the shadows, over down or field,  
 Driven by strong winds at play among  
     the clouds. 75

Yet one word more—one farewell word—  
     a wish  
 Which came, but it has passed into a  
     prayer—  
 That, as thy sun in brightness is de-  
     clining,  
 So—at an hour yet distant for *their* sakes  
 Whose tender love, here faltering on the  
     way 80  
 Of a diviner love, will be forgiven—  
 So may it set in peace, to rise again  
 For everlasting glory won by faith.

## XIX.

## GRACE DARLING.

[Composed 1843.—Published 1845.]

AMONG the dwellers in the silent fields  
 The natural heart is touched, and public  
     way  
 And crowded street resound with ballad  
     strains,  
 Inspired by ONE whose very name be-  
     speaks  
 Favour divine, exalting human love; 5  
 Whom, since her birth on bleak North-  
     umbria's coast,  
 Known unto few but prized as far as  
     known,  
 A single Act endears to high and low  
 Through the whole land—to Manhood,  
     moved in spite  
 Of the world's freezing cares—to generous  
     Youth— 10

To Infancy, that lips her praise—to Age  
 Whose eye reflects it, glistening through  
     a tear  
 Of tremulous admiration. Such true fame  
 Awaits her *now*; but, verily, good deeds  
 Do no imperishable record find 15  
 Save in the rolls of heaven, where hers  
     may live  
 A theme for angels, when they celebrate  
 The high-souled virtues which forgetful  
     earth  
 Has witnessed. Oh! that winds and  
     waves could speak  
 Of things which their united power called  
     forth 20  
 From the pure depths of her humanity!  
 A Maiden gentle, yet, at duty's call,  
 Firm and unflinching, as the Lighthouse  
     reared  
 On the Island-rock, her lonely dwelling-  
     place;  
 Or like the invincible Rock itself that  
     braves, 25  
 Age after age, the hostile elements,  
 As when it guarded holy Cuthbert's cell.

All night the storm had raged, nor  
 ceased, nor paused,  
 When, as day broke, the Maid, through  
     misty air,  
 Espies far off a Wreck, amid the surf, 30  
 Beating on one of those disastrous isles—  
 Half of a Vessel, half—no more; the rest  
 Had vanished, swallowed up with all  
     that there  
 Had for the common safety striven in vain,  
 Or thither thronged for refuge. With  
     quick glance 35  
 Daughter and Sire through optic-glass  
     discern,  
 Clinging about the remnant of this Ship,  
 Creatures—how precious in the Maiden's  
     sight!  
 For whom, belike, the old Man grieves  
     still more  
 Than for their fellow-sufferers engulfed  
 Where every parting agony is hushed, 41  
 And hope and fear mix not in further strife.  
 "But courage, Father! let us out to sea—  
 A few may yet be saved." The Daughter's  
     words,

Her earnest tone, and look beaming with  
faith, 45  
Dispel the Father's doubts: nor do they  
lack  
The noble-minded Mother's helping hand  
To launch the boat; and with her blessing  
cheered,  
And inwardly sustained by silent prayer,  
Together they put forth, Father and Child!  
Each grasps an oar, and struggling on  
they go— 51  
Rivals in effort; and, alike intent  
Here to elude and there surmount, they  
watch  
The billows lengthening, mutually crossed  
And shattered, and re-gathering their  
might; 55  
As if the tumult, by the Almighty's will  
Were, in the conscious sea, roused and  
prolonged  
That woman's fortitude—so tried, so  
proved—  
May brighten more and more!

True to the mark,  
They stem the current of that perilous  
gorge, 60  
Their arms still strengthening with the  
strengthening heart,  
Though danger, as the Wreck is neared,  
becomes  
More imminent. Not unseen do they  
approach;  
And rapture, with varieties of fear  
Incessantly conflicting, thrills the frames  
Of those who, in that dauntless energy, 66  
Foretaste deliverance; but the least  
perturbed  
Can scarcely trust his eyes, when he  
perceives,  
That of the pair—tossed on the waves to  
bring  
Hope to the hopeless, to the dying, life—  
One is a Woman, a poor earthly sister, 71  
Or, be the Visitant other than she seems,  
A guardian Spirit sent from pitying  
Heaven,  
In woman's shape. But why prolong the  
tale,  
Casting weak words amid a host of  
thoughts 75

Armed to repel them? Every hazard  
faced  
And difficulty mastered, with resolve  
That no one breathing should be left to  
perish,  
This last remainder of the crew are all  
Placed in the little boat, then o'er the  
deep 80  
Are safely borne, landed upon the beach,  
And, in fulfilment of God's mercy, lodged  
Within the sheltering Lighthouse.—  
Shout, ye Waves!  
Send forth a song of triumph. Waves  
and Winds,  
Exult in this deliverance wrought through  
faith 85  
In Him whose Providence your rage hath  
served!  
Ye screaming Sea-mews, in the concert  
join!  
And would that some immortal Voice—a  
Voice  
Fittingly attuned to all that gratitude  
Breathes out from floor or couch, through  
pallid lips 90  
Of the survivors—to the clouds might  
bear—  
Blended with praise of that parental love,  
Beneath whose watchful eye the Maiden  
grew  
Pious and pure, modest and yet so brave,  
Though young so wise, though meek so  
resolute— 95  
Might carry to the clouds and to the  
stars,  
Yea, to celestial Choirs, GRACE DARLING'S  
name!

## XX.

## THE RUSSIAN FUGITIVE.

## PART I.

[Composed 1830.—Published 1835.]

ENOUGH of rose-bud lips, and eyes  
Like harebells bathed in dew,  
Of cheek that with carnation vies,  
And veins of violet hue;  
Earth wants not beauty that may scorn 5  
A likening to frail flowers;  
Yea, to the stars, if they were born  
For seasons and for hours.

Through Moscow's gates, with gold un-  
barred,

Stepped One at dead of night, 10  
Whom such high beauty could not guard  
From meditated blight;  
By stealth she passed, and fled as fast  
As doth the hunted fawn,  
Nor stopped, till in the dapping east 15  
Appeared unwelcome dawn.

Seven days she lurked in brake and field,  
Seven nights her course renewed,  
Sustained by what her scrip might yield,  
Or berries of the wood; 20  
At length, in darkness travelling on,  
When lowly doors were shut,  
The haven of her hope she won,  
Her Foster-mother's hut.

"To put your love to dangerous proof 25  
I come," said she, "from far;  
For I have left my Father's roof,  
In terror of the Czar."  
No answer did the Matron give,  
No second look she cast, 30  
But hung upon the Fugitive,  
Embracing and embraced.

She led the Lady to a seat  
Beside the glimmering fire,  
Bathed duteously her wayworn feet, 35  
Prevented each desire:—  
The cricket chirped, the house-dog dozed,  
And on that simple bed,  
Where she in childhood had reposed,  
Now rests her weary head. 40

When she, whose couch had been the sod,  
Whose curtain pine or thorn,  
Had breathed a sigh of thanks to God,  
Who comforts the forlorn;  
While over her the Matron bent 45  
Sleep sealed her eyes, and stole  
Feeling from limbs with travel spent,  
And trouble from the soul.

Refreshed, the Wanderer rose at morn,  
And soon again was dight 50  
In those unworthy vestments worn  
Through long and perilous flight;  
And "O beloved Nurse," she said,  
"My thanks with silent tears  
Have unto Heaven and You been paid: 55  
Now listen to my fears!

"Have you forgot?"—and here she smiled—  
"The babbling flatteries  
You lavished on me when a child  
Disporting round your knees? 60  
I was your lambkin, and your bird,  
Your star, your gem, your flower;  
Light words, that were more lightly  
heard  
In many a cloudless hour!

"The blossom you so fondly praised 65  
Is come to bitter fruit;  
A mighty One upon me gazed;  
I spurned his lawless suit,  
And must be hidden from his wrath:  
You, Foster-father dear, 70  
Will guide me in my forward path;  
I may not tarry here!

"I cannot bring to utter woo  
Your proved fidelity."—  
"Dear child, sweet Mistress, say not so!  
For you we both would die." 75  
"Nay, nay, I come with semblance  
feigned  
And cheek embrowned by art;  
Yet, being inwardly unstained,  
With courage will depart." 80

"But whither would you, could you, flee?  
A poor Man's counsel take;  
The Holy Virgin gives to me  
A thought for your dear sake;  
Rest, shielded by our Lady's grace, 85  
And soon shall you be led  
Forth to a safe abiding-place,  
Where never foot doth tread."

## PART II.

THE dwelling of this faithful pair  
In a straggling village stood, 90  
For One who breathed unquiet air  
A dangerous neighbourhood;  
But wide around lay forest ground  
With thickets rough and blind;  
And pine-trees made a heavy shade 95  
Impervious to the wind.  
And there, sequestered from the sight,  
Was spread a treacherous swamp,  
On which the noonday sun shed light  
As from a lonely lamp; 100

And midway in the unsafe morass,  
A single Island rose  
Of firm dry ground, with healthful grass  
Adorned, and shady boughs.

The Woodman knew, for such the craft  
This Russian vassal plied, 106  
That never fowler's gun, nor shaft  
Of archer, there was tried;  
A sanctuary seemed the spot  
From all intrusion free; 110  
And there he planned an artful Cot  
For perfect secrecy.

With earnest pains unchecked by dread  
Of Power's far-stretching hand,  
The bold good Man his labour sped 115  
At nature's pure command;  
Heart-soothed, and busy as a wren,  
While, in a hollow nook,  
She moulds her sight-eluding den  
Above a murmuring brook. 120

His task accomplished to his mind,  
The twain ere break of day  
Creep forth, and through the forest wind  
Their solitary way;  
Few words they speak, nor dare to slack  
Their pace from mile to mile, 126  
Till they have crossed the quaking marsh,  
And reached the lonely Isle.

The sun above the pine-trees showed  
A bright and cheerful face; 130  
And Ina looked for her abode,  
The promised hiding-place;  
She sought in vain, the Woodman smiled;  
No threshold could be seen,  
Nor roof, nor window;—all seemed wild  
As it had ever been. 136

Advancing, you might guess an hour,  
The front with such nice care  
Is masked, "if house it be or bower,"  
But in they entered are; 140  
As shaggy as were wall and roof  
With branches intertwined,  
So smooth was all within, air-proof,  
And delicately lined:

And hearth was there, and maple dish,  
And cups in seemly rows, 146  
And couch—all ready to a wish  
For nurture or repose;

And Heaven doth to her virtue grant  
That there she may abide 150  
In solitude, with every want  
By cautious love supplied.

No queen before a shouting crowd  
Led on in bridal state,  
E'er struggled with a heart so proud, 155  
Entering her palace gate;  
Rejoiced to bid the world farewell,  
No saintly anchoress  
E'er took possession of her cell  
With deeper thankfulness. 160

"Father of all, upon thy care  
And mercy am I thrown;  
Be thou my safeguard!"—such her prayer  
When she was left alone,  
Kneeling amid the wilderness 165  
When joy had passed away,  
And smiles, fond efforts of distress  
To hide what they betray!

The prayer is heard, the Saints have  
seen,  
Diffused through form and face, 170  
Resolves devotedly serene;  
That monumental grace  
Of Faith, which doth all passions tame  
That Reason *should* control;  
And shows in the untrebling frame 175  
A statue of the soul.

## PART III.

'Tis sung in ancient minstrelsy  
That Phœbus wont to wear  
The leaves of any pleasant tree  
Around his golden hair; 180  
Till Daphne, desperate with pursuit  
Of his imperious love,  
At her own prayer transformed, took root,  
A laurel in the grove.

Then did the Penitent adorn 185  
His brow with laurel green;  
And 'mid his bright locks never shorn  
No meaner leaf was seen;  
And poets sage, through every age,  
About their temples wound 190  
The bay; and conquerors thanked the  
Gods,  
With laurel chaplets crowned.

Into the mists of fabling Time  
 So far runs back the praise  
 Of Beauty, that disdains to climb 195  
 Along forbidden ways;  
 That scorns temptation; power defies  
 Where mutual love is not;  
 And to the tomb for rescue flies  
 When life would be a blot. 200  
  
 To this fair Votaress a fate  
 More mild doth Heaven ordain  
 Upon her Island desolate;  
 And words, not breathed in vain,  
 Might tell what intercourse she found,  
 Her silence to endear; 206  
 What birds she tamed, what flowers the  
 ground  
 Sent forth her peace to cheer.  
  
 To one mute Presence, above all,  
 Her soothed affections clung, 210  
 A picture on the cabin wall  
 By Russian usage hung—  
 The Mother-maid, whose countenance  
 bright  
 With love abridged the day;  
 And, communed with by taper-light, 215  
 Chased spectral fears away.  
  
 And oft, as either Guardian came,  
 The joy in that retreat  
 Might any common friendship shame,  
 So high their hearts would beat; 220  
 And to the lone Recluse, whate'er  
 They brought, each visiting  
 Was like the crowding of the year  
 With a new burst of spring.  
  
 But when she of her Parents thought, 225  
 The pang was hard to bear;  
 And, if with all things not enwrought,  
 That trouble still is near.  
 Before her flight she had not dared  
 Their constancy to prove, 230  
 Too much the heroic Daughter feared  
 The weakness of their love.  
  
 Dark is the past to them, and dark  
 The future still must be,  
 Till pitying Saints conduct her bark 235  
 Into a safer sea—  
 Or gentle Nature close her eyes,  
 And set her Spirit free

From the altar of this sacrifice,  
 In vestal purity. 240  
  
 Yet, when above the forest-glooms  
 The white swans southward passed,  
 High as the pitch of their swift plumes  
 Her fancy rode the blast;  
 And bore her toward the fields of France,  
 Her Father's native land, 246  
 To mingle in the rustic dance,  
 The happiest of the band!  
  
 Of those beloved fields she oft  
 Had heard her Father tell 250  
 In phrase that now with echoes soft  
 Haunted her lonely cell;  
 She saw the hereditary bowers,  
 She heard the ancestral stream;  
 The Kremlin and its haughty towers 255  
 Forgotten like a dream!

## PART IV.

THE ever-changing Moon had traced  
 Twelve times her monthly round,  
 When through the unfrequented Waste  
 Was heard a startling sound; 260  
 A shout thrice sent from one who chased  
 At speed a wounded deer,  
 Bounding through branches interlaced,  
 And where the wood was clear.  
  
 The fainting creature took the marsh, 265  
 And toward the Island fled,  
 While plovers screamed with tumult  
 harsh  
 Above his antlered head;  
 This, Ina saw; and, pale with fear,  
 Shrunk to her citadel; 270  
 The desperate deer rushed on, and near  
 The tangled covert fell.  
  
 Across the marsh, the game in view,  
 The Hunter followed fast,  
 Nor paused, till o'er the stag he blew 275  
 A death-proclaiming blast;  
 Then, resting on her upright mind,  
 Came forth the Maid—"In me  
 Behold," she said, "a stricken Hind  
 Pursued by destiny! 280  
  
 "From your deportment, Sir! I deem  
 That you have worn a sword,  
 And will not hold in light esteem  
 A suffering woman's word;

- There is my covert, there perchance 285  
I might have lain concealed,  
My fortunes hid, my countenance  
Not even to you revealed.
- "Tears might be shed, and I might  
pray,  
Crouching and terrified, 290  
That what has been unveiled to-day,  
You would in mystery hide;  
But I will not defile with dust  
The knee that bends to adore  
The God in heaven;—attend, be just; 295  
This ask I, and no more!
- "I speak not of the winter's cold  
For summer's heat exchanged,  
While I have lodged in this rough hold,  
From social life estranged; 300  
Nor yet of trouble and alarms;  
High Heaven is my defence;  
And every season has soft arms  
For injured Innocence.
- "From Moscow to the Wilderness 305  
It was my choice to come,  
Lest virtue should be harbourless,  
And honour want a home;  
And happy were I, if the Czar  
Retain his lawless will, 310  
To end life here like this poor deer,  
Or a lamb on a green hill."
- "Are you the Maid," the Stranger cried,  
"From Gallic parents sprung,  
Whose vanishing was rumoured wide, 315  
Sad theme for every tongue;  
Who foiled an Emperor's eager quest?  
You, Lady, forced to wear  
These rude habiliments, and rest  
Your head in this dark lair!" 320
- But wonder, pity, soon were quelled;  
And in her face and mien  
The soul's pure brightness he beheld  
Without a veil between:  
He loved, he hoped,—a holy flame 325  
Kindled 'mid rapturous tears;  
The passion of a moment came  
As on the wings of years.
- "Such bounty is no gift of chance,"  
Exclaimed he: "righteous Heaven, 330
- Preparing your deliverance,  
To me the charge hath given.  
The Czar full oft in words and deeds  
Is stormy and self-willed;  
But, when the Lady Catherine pleads, 335  
His violence is stilled.
- "Leave open to my wish the course,  
And I to her will go;  
From that humane and heavenly source  
Good, only good, can flow." 340  
Faint sanction given, the Cavalier  
Was eager to depart,  
Though question followed question, dear  
To the Maiden's filial heart.
- Light was his step,—his hopes, more  
light, 345  
Kept pace with his desires;  
And the fifth morning gave him sight  
Of Moscow's glittering spires.  
He sued:—heart-smitten by the wrong,  
To the lorn Fugitive 350  
The Emperor sent a pledge as strong  
As sovereign power could give.
- O more than mighty change! If e'er  
Amazement rose to pain,  
And joy's excess produced a fear 355  
Of something void and vain;  
'Twas when the Parents, who had mourned  
So long the lost as dead,  
Beheld their only Child returned  
The household floor to tread. 360
- Soon gratitude gave way to love  
Within the Maiden's breast;  
Delivered and Deliverer move  
In bridal garments dress;  
Meek Catherine had her own reward; 365  
The Czar bestowed a dower;  
And universal Moscow shared  
The triumph of that hour.
- Flowers strewed the ground; the nuptial  
feast  
Was held with costly state; 370  
And there, 'mid many a noble guest,  
The Foster-parents sat;  
Encouraged by the imperial eye,  
They shrank not into shade;  
Great was their bliss, the honour high 375  
To them and nature paid!

# INSCRIPTIONS.

## I.

IN THE GROUNDS OF COLEORTON, THE  
SEAT OF SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT,  
BART., LEICESTERSHIRE.

[Composed 1808.—Published 1815.]

THE embowering rose, the acacia, and the  
pine,  
Will not unwillingly their place resign ;  
If but the Cedar thrive that near them  
stands,

Planted by Beaumont's and by Words-  
worth's hands.

One wooed the silent Art with studious  
pains: 5

These groves have heard the Other's pen-  
sive strains ;

Devoted thus, their spirits did unite  
By interchange of knowledge and delight.  
May Nature's kindest powers sustain  
the Tree,

And Love protect it from all injury ! 10  
And when its potent branches, wide out-  
thrown,

Darken the brow of this memorial Stone,  
Here may some Painter sit in future days,  
Some future Poet meditate his lays ; 14  
Not mindless of that distant age renowned  
When Inspiration hovered o'er this ground,  
The haunt of him who sang how spear and  
shield

In civil conflict met on Bosworth-field ;  
And of that famous Youth, full soon  
removed

From earth, perhaps by Shakespeare's  
self approved, 20  
Fletcher's Associate, Jonson's Friend be-  
loved.

## II.

IN A GARDEN OF THE SAME.

[Composed 1811 (?).—Published 1815.]

OFt is the medal faithful to its trust  
When temples, columns, towers, are laid  
in dust ;

And 'tis a common ordinance of fate  
That things obscure and small outlive the  
great :

Hence, when yon mansion and the flowery  
trim 5

Of this fair garden, and its alleys dim,  
And all its stately trees, are passed away,  
This little Niche, unconscious of decay,  
Perchance may still survive. And be it  
known

That it was scooped within the living  
stone,— 10

Not by the sluggish and ungrateful pains  
Of labourer plodding for his daily gains,  
But by an industry that wrought in love ;  
With help from female hands, that proudly  
strove

To aid the work, what time these walks  
and bowers 15

Were shaped to cheer dark winter's lonely  
hours.

## III.

WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF SIR  
GEORGE BEAUMONT, BART., AND IN  
HIS NAME, FOR AN URN, PLACED BY  
HIM AT THE TERMINATION OF A  
NEWLY-PLANTED AVENUE, IN THE  
SAME GROUNDS.

[Composed November, 1811.—Published 1815.]

YE Lime-trees, ranged before this hal-  
lowed Urn,

Shoot forth with lively power at Spring's  
return ;

And be not slow a stately growth to rear  
Of pillars, branching off from year to year,  
Till they have learned to frame a dark-  
some aisle ;— 5

That may recall to mind that awful File  
Where Reynolds, 'mid our country's  
noblest dead,

In the last sanctity of fame is laid.

—There, though by right the exelling  
Painter sleep  
Where Death and Glory a joint sabbath  
keep, 10  
Yet not the less his Spirit would hold dear  
Self-hidden praise, and Friendship's  
private tear:

Hence, on my patrimonial grounds, have I  
Raised this frail tribute to his memory;  
From youth a zealous follower of the Art  
That he professed; attached to him in  
heart; 16  
Admiring, loving, and with grief and pride  
Feeling what England lost when Reynolds  
died.

IV.

FOR A SEAT IN THE GROVES OF  
COLEORTON.

[Composed November 19, 1811.—Published 1815.]

BENEATH yon eastern ridge, the craggy  
bound,

Rugged and high, of Charnwood's forest  
ground,

Stand yet, but, Stranger! hidden from  
thy view,

The ivied Ruins of forlorn GRACE DIEU;  
Erst a religious House, which day and night  
With hymns resounded, and the chanted  
rite: 6

And when those rites had ceased, the Spot  
gave birth

To honourable Men of various worth:  
There, on the margin of a streamlet wild,  
Did Francis Beaumont sport, an eager  
child; 10

There, under shadow of the neighbouring  
rocks,

Sang youthful tales of shepherds and  
their flocks;

Unconscious prelude to heroic themes,  
Heart-breaking tears, and melancholy  
dreams

Of slighted love, and scorn, and jealous rage,  
With which his genius shook the buskined  
stage. 16

Communities are lost, and Empires die,  
And things of holy use unhallowed lie;  
They perish;—but the Intellect can raise,  
From airy words alone, a Pile that ne'er  
decays. 20

V.

WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL UPON A  
STONE IN THE WALL OF THE HOUSE  
(AN OUT-HOUSE), ON THE ISLAND AT  
GRASMERE.

[Composed 1800.—Published 1800.]

RUDE is this Edifice, and Thou hast seen  
Buildings, albeit rude, that have main-  
tained

Proportions more harmonious, and ap-  
proached

To closer fellowship with ideal grace.  
But take it in good part:—alas! the poor  
Vitruvius of our village had no help 6

From the great City; never, upon leaves  
Of red Morocco folio saw displayed,

In long succession, pre-existing ghosts  
Of Beauties yet unborn—the rustic Lodge

Antique, and Cottage with verandah  
graced, 11

Nor lacking, for fit company, alcove,  
Green-house, shell-grot, and moss-lined  
hermitage.

Thou see'st a homely Pile, yet to these  
walls

The heifer comes in the snow-storm, and  
here 15

The new-dropped lamb finds shelter from  
the wind.

And hither does one Poet sometimes row  
His pinnacle, a small vagrant barge, up-  
piled

With plentiful store of heath and withered  
fern,

(A lading which he with his sickle cuts, 20  
Among the mountains) and beneath this  
roof

He makes his summer couch, and here at  
noon

Spreads out his limbs, while, yet unshorn,  
the Sheep,

Panting beneath the burthen of their wool,  
Lie round him, even as if they were a part

Of his own Household: nor, while from  
his bed 26

He looks, through the open door-place,  
toward the lake

And to the stirring breezes, does he want  
Creations lovely as the work of sleep—

Fair sights, and visions of romantic joy!

## VI.

WRITTEN WITH A SLATE PENCIL ON A  
STONE, ON THE SIDE OF THE MOUN-  
TAIN OF BLACK COMB.

[Composed 1813.—Published 1815.]

STAY, bold Adventurer; rest awhile thy  
limbs

On this commodious Seat! for much re-  
mains

Of hard ascent before thou reach the top  
Of this huge Eminence,—from blackness  
named,

And, to far-travelled storms of sea and  
land,

A favourite spot of tournament and war! 5  
But thee may no such boisterous visit-  
ants

Molest; may gentle breezes fan thy brow;  
And neither cloud conceal, nor misty air  
Bedim, the grand terraqueous spectacle, 10  
From centre to circumference, unveiled!  
Know, if thou grudge not to prolong thy  
rest,

That on the summit whither thou art  
bound,

A geographic Labourer pitched his tent,  
With books supplied and instruments of  
art,

To measure height and distance; lonely  
task,

Week after week pursued!—To him was  
given

Full many a glimpse (but sparingly be-  
stowed

On timid man) of Nature's processes  
Upon the exalted hills. He made report  
That once, while there he plied his studious  
work

Within that canvass Dwelling, colours,  
lines,

And the whole surface of the out-spread  
map,

Became invisible: for all around  
Had darkness fallen—unthreatened, un-  
proclaimed—

As if the golden day itself had been  
Extinguished in a moment; total gloom,  
In which he sate alone, with unclosed  
eyes,

Upon the blinded mountain's silent top!

## VII.

WRITTEN WITH A SLATE PENCIL UPON  
A STONE, THE LARGEST OF A HEAP  
LYING NEAR A DESERTED QUARRY,  
UPON ONE OF THE ISLANDS AT  
RYDAL.

[Composed 1800.—Published 1800.]

STRANGER! this hillock of mis-shapen  
stones

Is not a Ruin spared or made by time,  
Nor, as perchance thou rashly deem'st,  
the Cairn

Of some old British Chief: 'tis nothing  
more

Than the rude embryo of a little Dome 5  
Or Pleasure-house, once destined to be  
built

Among the birch-trees of this rocky isle.  
But, as it chanced, Sir William having  
learned

That from the shore a full-grown man  
might wade,

And make himself a freeman of this spot 9  
At any hour he chose, the prudent Knight  
Desisted, and the quarry and the mound  
Are monuments of his unfinished task.

The block on which these lines are traced,  
perhaps,

Was once selected as the corner-stone 15  
Of that intended Pile, which would have  
been

Some quaint odd plaything of elaborate  
skill,

So that, I guess, the linnet and the  
thrush,

And other little builders who dwell here,  
Had wondered at the work. But blame  
him not,

For old Sir William was a gentle Knight, 20  
Bred in this vale, to which he appertained  
With all his ancestry. Then peace to him,  
And for the outrage which he had devised  
Entire forgiveness!—But if thou art one 25  
On fire with thy impatience to become  
An inmate of these mountains,—if, dis-  
turbed

By beautiful conceptions, thou hast hewn  
Out of the quiet rock the elements

Of thy trim Mansion destined soon to  
blaze 30

In snow-white splendour,—think again ;  
and, taught  
By old Sir William and his quarry, leave  
Thy fragments to the bramble and the  
rose ;  
There let the vernal slow-worm sun him-  
self,  
And let the redbreast hop from stone to  
stone. 35

VIII.

[Composed 1830 (? 1831).—Published 1835.]

In these fair vales hath many a Tree  
At Wordsworth's suit been spared ;  
And from the builder's hand this Stone,  
For some rude beauty of its own,  
Was rescued by the Bard : 5  
So let it rest ; and time will come  
When here the tender-hearted  
May heave a gentle sigh for him,  
As one of the departed.

IX.

[Composed 1826.—Published 1835.]

THE massy Ways, carried across these  
heights  
By Roman perseverance, are destroyed,  
Or hidden under ground, like sleeping  
worms.  
How venture then to hope that Time will  
spare  
This humble Walk? Yet on the moun-  
tain's side 5  
A POET's hand first shaped it; and the  
steps  
Of that same Bard—repeated to and fro  
At morn, at noon, and under moonlight  
skies  
Through the vicissitudes of many a year—  
Forbade the weeds to creep o'er its grey  
line. 10  
No longer, scattering to the heedless winds  
The vocal raptures of fresh poesy,  
Shall he frequent these precincts; locked  
no more  
In earnest converse with beloved Friends,  
Here will he gather stores of ready bliss, 15  
As from the beds and borders of a garden  
Choice flowers are gathered! But, if  
Power may spring

Out of a farewell yearning—favoured more  
Than kindred wishes mated suitably  
With vain regrets—the Exile would con-  
sign 20  
This Walk, his loved possession, to the  
care  
Of those pure Minds that reverence the  
Muse.

X.

INSCRIPTIONS SUPPOSED TO BE FOUND  
IN AND NEAR A HERMIT'S CELL.

[This group (x.—xiv.) was composed 1818.—Pub-  
lished 1820.]

I.

HOPES what are they?—Beads of morning  
Strung on slender blades of grass;  
Or a spider's web adorning  
In a strait and treacherous pass.

What are fears but voices airy? 5  
Whispering harm where harm is not;  
And deluding the unwary  
Till the fatal bolt is shot!

What is glory?—in the socket  
See how dying tapers fare! 10  
What is pride?—a whizzing rocket  
That would emulate a star.

What is friendship?—do not trust her,  
Nor the vows which she has made;  
Diamonds dart their brightest lustre 15  
From a palsy-shaken head.

What is truth?—a staff rejected;  
Duty?—an unwelcome clog;  
Joy?—a moon by fits reflected  
In a swamp or watery bog; 20

Bright, as if through ether steering,  
To the Traveller's eye it shone:  
He hath hailed it re-appearing—  
And as quickly it is gone;

Such is Joy—as quickly hidden, 25  
Or mis-shapen to the sight,  
And by sullen weeds forbidden  
To resume its native light.

What is youth?—a dancing willow,  
(Winds behind, and rocks before!) 30  
Age?—a drooping, tottering willow  
On a flat and lazy shore.

What is peace?—when pain is over,  
And love ceases to rebel,  
Let the last faint sigh discover  
That precedes the passing-knell!

## XI.

INSCRIBED UPON A ROCK.

## II.

PAUSE, Traveller! whosoe'er thou be  
Whom chance may lead to this retreat,  
Where silence yields reluctantly  
Even to the fleecy straggler's bleat;  
Give voice to what my hand shall trace, 5  
And fear not lest an idle sound  
Of words unsuited to the place  
Disturb its solitude profound.  
I saw this Rock, while vernal air  
Blew softly o'er the russet heath, 10  
Uphold a Monument as fair  
As church or abbey furnisheth.  
Unsullied did it meet the day,  
Like marble, white, like ether, pure;  
As if, beneath, some hero lay, 15  
Honoured with costliest sepulture.  
My fancy kindled as I gazed;  
And, ever as the sun shone forth,  
The flattered structure glistened, blazed,  
And seemed the proudest thing on earth.  
But frost had reared the gorgeous Pile 21  
Unsound as those which Fortune builds—  
To undermine with secret guile,  
Sapped by the very beam that gilds.  
And, while I gazed, with sudden shock 25  
Fell the whole Fabric to the ground;  
And naked left this dripping Rock,  
With shapeless ruin spread around!

## XII.

## III.

HAST thou seen, with flash incessant,  
Bubbles gliding under ice,  
Bodied forth and evanescent,  
No one knows by what device?  
Such are thoughts!—A wind-swept  
meadow 5  
Mimicking a troubled sea,  
Such is life; and death a shadow  
From the rock eternity!

## XIII.

NEAR THE SPRING OF THE HERMITAGE.

## IV.

TROUBLED long with warring notions  
Long impatient of Thy rod,  
I resign my soul's emotions  
Unto Thee, mysterious God!

What avails the kindly shelter  
Yielded by this craggy rent, 5  
If my spirit toss and welter  
On the waves of discontent?

Parching Summer hath no warrant  
To consume this crystal Well; 10  
Rains, that make each rill a torrent,  
Neither sully it nor swell.

Thus, dishonouring not her station,  
Would my Life present to Thee,  
Gracious God, the pure oblation 15  
Of divine tranquillity!

## XIV.

## V.

NOT seldom, clad in radiant vest,  
Deceitfully goes forth the Morn;  
Not seldom Evening in the west  
Sinks smilingly forsworn.

The smoothest seas will sometimes prove,  
To the confiding Bark, untrue; 6  
And, if she trust the stars above  
They can be treacherous too.

The umbrageous Oak, in pomp outspread,  
Full oft, when storms the welkin rend, 10  
Draws lightning down upon the head  
It promised to defend.

But Thou art true, incarnate Lord,  
Who didst vouchsafe for man to die;  
Thy smile is sure, Thy plighted word 15  
No change can falsify!

I bent before Thy gracious throne,  
And asked for peace on suppliant knee;  
And peace was given,—nor peace alone, 20  
But faith sublimed to ecstasy!

XV.

FOR THE SPOT WHERE THE HERMITAGE  
STOOD ON ST. HERBERT'S ISLAND,  
DERWENT-WATER.

[Composed 1800.—Published 1800.]

If thou in the dear love of some one  
Friend

Hast been so happy that thou know'st  
what thoughts

Will sometimes in the happiness of love  
Make the heart sink, then wilt thou  
reverence

This quiet spot; and, Stranger! not un-  
moved

Wilt thou behold this shapeless heap of  
stones,

The desolate ruins of St. Herbert's Cell.  
Here stood his threshold; here was spread  
the roof

That sheltered him, a self-secluded Man,  
After long exercise in social cares

And offices humane, intent to adore

The Deity, with undistracted mind,  
And meditate on everlasting things,

In utter solitude.—But he had left  
A Fellow-labourer, whom the good Man

loved

As his own soul. And, when with eye  
upraised

To heaven he knelt before the crucifix,

While o'er the lake the cataract of Lo-  
dore

Pealed to his orisons, and when he paced  
Along the beach of this small isle and  
thought

Of his Companion, he would pray that  
both

(Now that their earthly duties were ful-  
filled)

Might die in the same moment. Nor in  
vain

So prayed he:—as our chronicles report,  
Though here the Hermit numbered his  
last day

Far from St. Cuthbert his beloved Friend,  
Those holy Men both died in the same  
hour.

XVI.

ON THE BANKS OF A ROCKY STREAM.

[Composed ?.—Published 1850.]

BEHOLD an emblem of our human mind  
Crowded with thoughts that need a settled  
home,

Yet, like to eddying balls of foam  
Within this whirlpool, they each other  
chase

Round and round, and neither find

An outlet nor a resting-place!  
Stranger, if such disquietude be thine,  
Fall on thy knees and sue for help divine.

# SELECTIONS FROM CHAUCER.

## MODERNISED.

### I.

#### THE PRIORESS' TALE.

"Call up him who left half told  
The story of Canibuscán bold."

In the following Poem no further deviation from the original has been made than was necessary for the fluent reading and instant understanding of the Author: so much, however, is the language altered since Chaucer's time, especially in pronunciation, that much was to be removed, and its place supplied with as little incongruity as possible. The ancient accent has been retained in a few conjunctions, as *also* and *alway*, from a conviction that such sprinklings of antiquity would be admitted, by persons of taste, to have a graceful accordance with the subject. The fierce bigotry of the Prioress forms a fine background for her tender-hearted sympathies with the Mother and Child; and the mode in which the story is told amply atones for the extravagance of the miracle.

[Written 1801.—Published 1820.]

#### I.

"O LORD, our Lord! how wondrously,"  
(quoth she)  
"Thy name in this large world is spread  
abroad!  
For not alone by men of dignity  
Thy worship is performed and precious  
laud;  
But by the mouths of children, gracious  
God!  
Thy goodness is set forth; they when they  
lie  
Upon the breast Thy name do glorify.

#### II.

"Wherefore in praise, the worthiest that  
I may,  
Jesu! of Thee, and the white Lily-flower  
Which did Thee bear, and is a Maid for  
aye,  
To tell a story I will use my power;  
Not that I may increase her honour's  
dower,

For she herself is honour, and the root  
Of goodness, next her Son, our soul's best  
boot.

#### III.

"O Mother Maid! O Maid and Mother  
free!  
O bush unburnt! burning in Moses'  
sight!  
That down didst ravish from the Deity,  
Through humbleness, the Spirit that did  
alight  
Upon thy heart, whence, through that  
glory's might,  
Conceived was the Father's sapience,  
Help me to tell it in thy reverence!

#### IV.

"Lady! thy goodness, thy magnificence,  
Thy virtue, and thy great humility,  
Surpass all science and all utterance;  
For sometimes, Lady! ere men pray to  
thee  
Thou goest before in thy benignity,

The light to us vouchsafing of thy prayer,  
To be our guide unto thy Son so dear.

## V.

"My knowledge is so weak, O blissful  
Queen!

To tell abroad thy mighty worthiness, 30  
That I the weight of it may not sustain;  
But as a child of twelvemonths old or less,  
That laboureth his language to express,  
Even so fare I; and therefore, I thee pray,  
Guide thou my song which I of thee shall  
say. 35

## VI.

"There was in Asia, in a mighty town,  
Mong Christian folk, a street where Jews  
might be,  
Assigned to them and given them for  
their own

By a great Lord, for gain and usury,  
Hateful to Christ and to His company; 40  
And through this street who list might  
ride and wend;  
Free was it, and unbarred at either end.

## VII.

"A little school of Christian people stood  
Down at the farther end, in which there  
were

A nest of children come of Christian  
blood, 45  
That learned in that school from year to  
year

Such sort of doctrine as men used there,  
That is to say, to sing and read also,  
As little children in their childhood do.

## VIII.

"Among these children was a Widow's  
son, 50

A little scholar<sup>1</sup>, scarcely seven years old,  
Who day by day unto this school hath  
gone,

And eke, when he the image did behold  
Of Jesu's Mother, as he had been told,  
This Child was wont to kneel adown and  
say 55

*Ave Marie*, as he goeth by the way.

<sup>1</sup> Clergeon (Chaucer); i.e. chorister.—Ed.

## IX.

"This Widow thus her little Son hath  
taught

Our blissful Lady, Jesu's Mother dear,  
To worship aye, and he forgat it not;  
For simple<sup>2</sup> infant hath a ready ear. 60  
Sweet is the holiness of youth: and hence,  
Calling to mind this matter when I may,  
Saint Nicholas in my presence standeth  
aye,  
For he so young to Christ did reverence.

## X.

"This little Child, while in the school he  
sate 65

His Primer conning with an earnest  
cheer,  
The whilst the rest their anthem-book  
repeat

The *Alma Redemptoris* did he hear;  
And as he durst he drew him near and  
near,  
And hearkened to the words and to the  
note, 70  
Till the first verse he learned it all by rote.

## XI.

"This Latin knew he nothing what it  
said,

For he too tender was of age to know;  
But to his comrade he repaired, and  
prayed

That he the meaning of this song would  
show, 75  
And unto him declare why men sing so;  
This oftentimes, that he might be at ease,  
This child did him beseech on his bare  
knees.

## XII.

"His Schoolfellow, who elder was than he,  
Answered him thus:—'This song, I have  
heard say, 80

Was fashioned for our blissful Lady free;  
Her to salute, and also her to pray  
To be our help upon our dying day:  
If there is more in this, I know it not;  
Song do I learn,—small grammar I have  
got.' 85

<sup>2</sup> *Sely* (Chaucer); i.e. happy. Line 61 was interpolated by Wordsworth.—Ed.

## XIII.

"And is this song fashioned in reverence  
Of Jesu's Mother?" said this Innocent;  
'Now, certes, I will use my diligence  
To con it all ere Christmas-tide be spent;  
Although I for my Primer shall be shent,  
And shall be beaten three times in an  
hour, 91  
Our Lady I will praise with all my power.

## XIV.

"His Schoolfellow, whom he had so besought,  
As they went homeward taught him  
privily  
And then he sang it well and fearlessly,  
From word to word according to the  
note: 96  
Twice in a day it passed through his  
throat;  
Homeward and schoolward whensoever he  
went,  
On Jesu's Mother fixed was his intent.

## XV.

"Through all the Jewry (this before  
said I) 100  
This little Child, as he came to and fro,  
Full merrily then would he sing and cry,  
O *Alma Redemptoris*! high and low:  
The sweetness of Christ's Mother pierced  
so  
His heart, that her to praise, to her to  
pray, 105  
He cannot stop his singing by the way.

## XVI.

"The Serpent, Satan, our first foe, that  
hath  
His wasp's nest in Jew's heart, upswelled  
—'O woe,  
O Hebrew people!' said he in his wrath,  
'Is it an honest thing? Shall this be so?  
That such a Boy where'er he lists shall go  
In your despite, and sing his hymns and  
saws,  
Which is against the reverence of our  
laws!'

## XVII.

"From that day forward have the Jews  
conspired 114  
Out of the world this Innocent to chase;  
And to this end a Homicide they hired,  
That in an alley had a privy place,  
And, as the Child 'gan to the school to  
pace,  
This cruel Jew him seized, and held him  
fast  
And cut his throat, and in a pit him  
cast. 120

## XVIII.

"I say that him into a pit they threw,  
A loathsome pit, whence noisome scents  
exhale;  
O cursèd folk! away, ye Herods new!  
What may your ill intentions you avail?  
Murder will out; certes it will not fail;  
Know, that the honour of high God may  
spread, 126  
The blood cries out on your accursèd deed.

## XIX.

"O Martyr 'stablished in virginity!  
Now may'st thou sing for aye before the  
throne,  
Following the Lamb celestial," quoth  
she, 130  
"Of which the great Evangelist, Saint  
John,  
In Patmos wrote, who saith of them that  
go  
Before the Lamb singing continually,  
That never fleshly woman they did know.

## XX.

"Now this poor Widow waiteth all that  
night 135  
After her little Child, and he came not;  
For which, by earliest glimpse of morning  
light,  
With face all pale with dread and busy  
thought,  
She at the School and elsewhere him hath  
sought,  
Until thus far she learned, that he had  
been 140  
In the Jews' street, and there he last was  
seen.

## XXI.

"With Mother's pity in her breast enclosed  
 She goeth, as she were half out of her mind,  
 To every place wherein she hath supposed  
 By likelihood her little Son to find; 145  
 And ever on Christ's Mother meek and kind  
 She cried, till to the Jewry she was brought,  
 And him among the accursèd Jews she sought.

## XXII.

"She asketh, and she piteously deth pray  
 To every Jew that dwelleth in that place  
 To tell her if her child had passed that way; 151  
 They all said—Nay; but Jesu of His grace  
 Gave to her thought, that in a little space  
 She for her Son in that same spot did cry  
 Where he was cast into a pit hard by. 155

## XXIII.

"O Thou great God that dost perform  
 Thy laud  
 By mouths of Innocents, lo! here Thy might;  
 This gem of chastity, this emerald,  
 And eke of martyrdom this ruby bright,  
 There, where with mangled throat he lay upright, 160  
 The *Alma Redemptoris* 'gan to sing  
 So loud, that with his voice the place did ring.

## XXIV.

"The Christian folk that through the Jewry went  
 Come to the spot in wonder at the thing;  
 And hastily they for the Provost sent; 165  
 Immediately he came, not tarrying,  
 And praiseth Christ that is our heavenly King,  
 And eke His Mother, honour of Mankind:  
 Which done, he bade that they the Jews should bind.

## XXV.

"This Child with piteous lamentation then 170  
 Was taken up, singing his song alway;  
 And with procession great and pomp of men  
 To the next Abbey him they bare away;  
 His Mother swooning by the body lay:  
 And scarcely could the people that were near 175  
 Remove this second Rachel from the bier.

## XXVI.

"Torment and shameful death to every one  
 This Provost doth for those bad Jews prepare  
 That of this murder wist, and that anon:  
 Such wickedness his judgments cannot spare; 180  
 Who will do evil, evil shall he bear;  
 Them therefore with wild horses did he draw,  
 And after that he hung them by the law.

## XXVII.

"Upon his bier this Innocent doth lie  
 Before the altar while the Mass doth last: 185  
 The Abbot with his convent's company  
 Then sped themselves to bury him full fast;  
 And, when they holy water on him cast,  
 Yet spake this Child when sprinkled was the water;  
 And sang, O *Alma Redemptoris Mater*! 190

## XXVIII.

"This Abbot, for he was a holy man,  
 As all Monks are, or surely ought to be,  
 In supplication to the Child began  
 Thus saying, 'O dear Child! I summon thee  
 In virtue of the holy Trinity 195  
 Tell me the cause why thou dost sing this hymn,  
 Since that thy throat is cut, as it doth seem.'

## XXIX.

"My throat is cut unto the bone, I  
 throw,  
 Said this young Child, 'and by the law of  
 kind  
 I should have died, yea many hours ago;  
 But Jesus Christ, as in the books ye  
 find,  
 Will that His glory last, and be in mind;  
 And, for the worship of His Mother dear,  
 Yet may I sing, O *Alma*! loud and clear.

## XXX.

"This well of mercy, Jesu's Mother  
 sweet,  
 After my knowledge I have loved alway;  
 And in the hour when I my death did  
 meet  
 To me she came, and thus to me did say,  
 'Thou in thy dying sing this holy lay,'  
 As ye have heard; and soon as I had  
 sung  
 Methought she laid a grain upon my  
 tongue.

## XXXI.

"Wherefore I sing, nor can from song  
 refrain,  
 In honour of that blissful Maiden free,  
 Till from my tongue off-taken is the grain;  
 And after that thus said she unto me; 215  
 'My little Child, then will I come for  
 thee  
 Soon as the grain from off thy tongue they  
 take:  
 Be not dismayed, I will not thee forsake!'

## XXXII.

"This holy Monk, this Abbot—him  
 mean I,  
 Touched then his tongue, and took away  
 the grain;  
 And he gave up the ghost full peacefully;  
 And, when the Abbot had this wonder  
 seen,  
 His salt tears trickled down like showers  
 of rain;  
 And on his face he dropped upon the  
 ground,  
 And still he lay as if he had been bound.

## XXXIII.

"Eke the whole Convent on the pave-  
 ment lay,  
 Weeping and praising Jesu's Mother  
 dear;  
 And after that they rose, and took their  
 way,  
 And lifted up this Martyr from the bier,  
 And in a tomb of precious marble clear  
 Enclosed his uncorrupted body sweet<sup>1</sup>.—  
 Where'er he be, God grant us him to  
 meet!

## XXXIV.

"Young Hew of Lincoln! in like sort laid  
 low  
 By cursed Jews—thing well and widely  
 known,  
 For it was done a little while ago—  
 Pray also thou for us, while here we tarry  
 Weak sinful folk, that God, with pitying  
 eye,  
 In mercy would His mercy multiply  
 On us, for reverence of His Mother Mary!"

## II.

THE CUCKOO AND THE NIGHTIN-  
GALE.

[Written 1801.—Published 1841 (R. H. Horne's  
*The Poems of Geoffrey Chaucer, Modern-  
 ized*); vol. of 1842.]

## I.

THE God of Love—*ah, benedicite!*  
 How mighty and how great a Lord is he!  
 For he of low hearts can make high, of high  
 He can make low, and unto death bring  
 nigh;  
 And hard hearts he can make them kind  
 and free.

## II.

Within a little time, as hath been found,  
 He can make sick folk whole and fresh  
 and sound;  
 Them who are whole in body and in  
 mind,  
 He can make sick,—bind can he and un-  
 bind  
 All that he will have bound, or have un-  
 bound.

<sup>1</sup> Enclosed they his little body sweet (Chaucer).  
 —Ed.

III.

To tell his might my wit may not suffice;  
Foolish men he can make them out of  
wise;—  
For he may do all that he will devise;  
Loose livers he can make abate their  
vice,  
And proud hearts can make tremble in  
a trice. 15

IV.

In brief, the whole of what he will, he  
may;  
Against him dare not any wight say  
nay;  
To humble or afflict whome'er he will,  
To gladden or to grieve, he hath like  
skill;  
But most his might he sheds on the eve  
of May. 20

V.

For every true heart, gentle heart and  
free,  
That with him is, or thinketh so to be,  
Now against May shall have some stir-  
ring—whether  
To joy, or be it to some mourning; never  
At other time, methinks, in like degree. 25

VI.

For now when they may hear the small  
birds' song,  
And see the budding leaves the branches  
throng,  
This unto their remembrance doth bring  
All kinds of pleasure mix'd with sorrow-  
ing;  
And longing of sweet thoughts that ever  
long. 30

VII.

And of that longing heaviness doth come,  
Whence oft great sickness grows of heart  
and home;  
Sick are they all for lack of their desire;  
And thus in May their hearts are set on  
fire,  
So that they burn forth in great martyr-  
dom. 35

VIII.

In sooth, I speak from feeling, what  
though now  
Old am I, and to genial pleasure slow;  
Yet have I felt of sickness through the  
May,  
Both hot and cold, and heart-aches every  
day,—  
How hard, alas! to bear, I only know. 40

IX.

Such shaking doth the fever in me keep  
Through all this May that I have little  
sleep;  
And also 'tis not likely unto me,  
That any living heart should sleepy be  
In which Love's dart its fiery point doth  
steep. 45

X.

But tossing lately on a sleepless bed,  
I of a token thought which Lovers heed;  
How among them it was a common tale,  
That it was good to hear the Nightingale,  
Ere the vile Cuckoo's note be uttered. 50

XI.

And then I thought anon as it was day,  
I gladly would go somewhere to essay  
If I perchance a Nightingale might hear,  
For yet had I heard none, of all that year,  
And it was then the third night of the May.

XII.

And soon as I a glimpse of day espied, 56  
No longer would I in my bed abide,  
But straight way to a wood that was hard by,  
Forth did I go, alone and fearlessly,  
And held the pathway down by a brook-  
side; 60

XIII.

Till to a lawn I came all white and green,  
I in so fair a one had never been.  
The ground was green, with daisy powder-  
ed over;  
Tall were the flowers, the grove a lofty  
cover<sup>1</sup>,  
All green and white; and nothing else was  
seen. 65

<sup>1</sup> The flowers and the grass alike all high  
(Chaucer); i.e. grass and daisies being of equal  
height.—Ed.

## XIV.

There sate I down among the fair fresh  
flowers,  
And saw the birds come tripping from  
their bowers,  
Where they had rested them all night;  
and they,  
Who were so joyful at the light of day,  
Began to honour May with all their  
powers. 70

## XV.

Well did they know that service all by  
rote,  
And there was many and many a lovely  
note,  
Some, singing loud, as if they had com-  
plained;  
Some with their notes another manner  
feigned;  
And some did sing all out with the full  
throat. 75

## XVI.

They pruned themselves, and made them-  
selves right gay,  
Dancing and leaping light upon the spray;  
And ever two and two together were,  
The same as they had chosen for the year,  
Upon Saint Valentine's returning day. 80

## XVII.

Meanwhile the stream, whose bank I sate  
upon,  
Was making such a noise as it ran on  
Accordant to the sweet Birds' harmony;  
Methought that it was the best melody  
Which ever to man's ear a passage won. 85

## XVIII.

And for delight, but how I never wot,  
I in a slumber and a swoon was caught,  
Not all asleep and yet not waking wholly;  
And as I lay, the Cuckoo, bird unholy, 89  
Broke silence, or I heard him in my  
thought.

## XIX.

And that was right upon a tree fast by,  
And who was then ill satisfied but I?

Now, God, quoth I, that died upon the  
rood,  
From thee and thy base throat, keep all  
that's good,  
Full little joy have I now of thy cry. 95

## XX.

And, as I with the Cuckoo thus 'gan  
chide,  
In the next bush that was me fast beside,  
I heard the lusty Nightingale so sing,  
That her clear voice made a loud rioting,  
Echoing thorough all the green wood  
wide. 100

## XXI.

Ah! good sweet Nightingale! for my  
heart's cheer,  
Hence hast thou stayed a little while too  
long;  
For we have had the sorry Cuckoo here,  
And she hath been before thee with her  
song;  
Evil light on her! she hath done me  
wrong. 105

## XXII.

But hear you now a wondrous thing, I  
pray;  
As long as in that swooning-fit I lay,  
Methought I wist right well what these  
birds meant,  
And had good knowing both of their  
intent,  
And of their speech, and all that they  
would say. 110

## XXIII.

The Nightingale thus in my hearing  
spake:—  
Good Cuckoo, seek some other bush or  
brake,  
And, prithee, let us that can sing dwell  
here;  
For every wight eschews thy song to hear,  
Such uncouth singing verily dost thou  
make. 115

## XXIV.

What! quoth she then, what is't that ails  
thee now?  
It seems to me I sing as well as thou;

For mine's a song that is both true and plain,—

Although I cannot quaver so in vain  
As thou dost in thy throat, I wot not how. 120

XXV.

All men may understanding have of me,  
But, Nightingale, so may they not of thee;

For thou hast many a foolish and quaint cry:—

Thou say'st OSEE, OSEE, then how may I  
Have knowledge, I thee pray, what this may be? 125

XXVI.

Ah, fool! quoth she, wist thou not what it is?

Oft as I say OSEE, OSEE, I wis,  
Then mean I, that I should be wonderous fain

That shamefully they one and all were slain,

Whoever against Love mean aught amiss.

XXVII.

And also would I that they all were dead,  
Who do not think in love their life to lead;

For who is loth the God of Love to obey,  
Is only fit to die, I dare well say,

And for that cause OSEE I cry; take heed! 135

XXVIII.

Ay, quoth the Cuckoo, that is a quaint law,

That all must love or die; but I withdraw,  
And take my leave of all such company,

For mine intent it neither is to die,  
Nor ever while I live Love's yoke to draw. 140

XXIX.

For lovers, of all folk that be alive,  
The most disquiet have and least do thrive;

Most feeling have of sorrow, woe and care,  
And the least welfare cometh to their share;

What need is there against the truth to strive? 145

XXX.

What! quoth she, thou art all out of thy mind,

That in thy churlishness a cause canst find

To speak of Love's true Servants in this mood;

For in this world no service is so good  
To every wight that gentle is of kind. 150

XXXI.

For thereof comes all goodness and all worth;

All gentleless and honour thence come forth;

Thence worship comes, content and true heart's pleasure,

And full-assured trust, joy without measure, 154

And jollity, fresh cheerfulness, and mirth;

XXXII.

And bounty, lowliness, and courtesy,  
And seemliness, and faithful company,

And dread of shame that will not do amiss;

For he that faithfully Love's servant is,  
Rather than be disgraced, would chuse to die. 160

XXXIII.

And that the very truth it is which I  
Now say—in such belief I'll live and die;

And Cuckoo, do thou so, by my advice.  
Then, quoth she, let me never hope for bliss,

If with that counsel I do e'er comply. 165

XXXIV.

Good Nightingale! thou speakest wonderous fair,

Yet for all that, the truth is found elsewhere;

For Love in young folk is but rage, I wis;

And Love in old folk a great dotage is;  
Who most it useth, him 'twill most impair. 170

## XXXV.

For thereof come all contraries to glad-  
ness;  
Thence sickness comes, and overwhelm-  
ing sadness,  
Mistrust and jealousy, despite, debate,  
Dishonour, shame, envy importunate,  
Pride, anger, mischief, poverty, and mad-  
ness.

175

## XXXVI.

Loving is aye an office of despair,  
And one thing is therein which is not  
fair;  
For whoso gets of love a little bliss,  
Unless it alway stay with him, I wis  
He may full soon go with an old man's  
hair.

180

## XXXVII.

And, therefore, Nightingale! do thou  
keep nigh,  
For trust me well, in spite of thy quaint  
cry,  
If long time from thy mate thou be, or  
far,  
Thou'lt be as others that forsaken are;  
Then shalt thou raise a clamour as do I.

## XXXVIII.

Fie, quoth she, on thy name, Bird ill  
beseen!  
The God of Love afflict thee with all  
teen,  
For thou art worse than mad a thousand  
fold;  
For many a one hath virtues manifold,  
Who had been nought, if Love had never  
been.

186

190

## XXXIX.

For evermore his servants Love amend-  
eth,  
And he from every blemish them de-  
fendeth;  
And maketh them to burn, as in a fire,  
In loyalty, and worshipful desire,  
And, when it likes him, joy enough them  
sendeth.

195

## XL.

Thou Nightingale! the Cuckoo said, be  
still,  
For Love no reason hath but his own  
will;—  
For to th' untrue he oft gives ease and  
joy;  
True lovers doth so bitterly annoy.  
He lets them perish through that grievous  
ill.

200

## XLI.

With such a master would I never be!  
For he, in sooth, is blind, and may not  
see,  
And knows not when he hurts and when  
he heals;  
Within this court full seldom Truth  
avails,  
So diverse in his wilfulness is he.

205

## XLII.

Then of the Nightingale did I take note,  
How from her inmost heart a sigh she  
brought,  
And said, Alas! that ever I was born,  
Not one word have I now, I am so  
forlorn,—  
And with that word, she into tears burst  
out.

210

## XLIII.

Alas, alas! my very heart will break,  
Quoth she, to hear this churlish bird thus  
speak  
Of Love, and of his holy services;  
Now, God of Love! thou help me in  
some wise,  
That vengeance on this Cuckoo I may  
wreak.

215

## XLIV.

And so methought I started up anon,  
And to the brook I ran and got a stone,  
Which at the Cuckoo hardly I cast,  
And he for dread did fly away full fast;  
And glad, in sooth, was I when he was  
gone.

220

<sup>1</sup> From a manuscript in the Bodleian, as are also stanzas 44 and 45, which are necessary to complete the sense.

XLV.

And as he flew, the Cuckoo, ever and aye,  
Kept crying, "Farewell!—farewell, Pop-  
injay!"  
As if in scornful mockery of me;  
And on I hunted him from tree to tree,  
Till he was far, all out of sight, away. 225

XLVI.

Then straightway came the Nightingale  
to me,  
And said, Forsooth, my friend, do I  
thank thee,  
That thou wert near to rescue me; and  
now,  
Unto the God of Love I make a vow,  
That all this May I will thy songstress  
be. 230

XLVII.

Well satisfied, I thanked her, and she  
said,  
By this mishap no longer be dismayed,  
Though thou the Cuckoo heard, ere thou  
heard'st me;  
Yet if I live it shall amended be,  
When next May comes, if I am not  
afraid. 235

XLVIII.

And one thing will I counsel thee also,  
The Cuckoo trust not thou, nor his Love's  
saw;  
All that she said is an outrageous lie.  
Nay, nothing shall me bring thereto,  
quoth I,  
For Love, and it hath done me mighty  
woe. 240

XLIX.

Yea, hath it? use, quoth she, this  
medicine;  
This May-time, every day before thou  
dine,  
Go look on the fresh daisy; then say I,  
Although for pain thou may'st be like to  
die,  
Thou wilt be eased, and less wilt droop  
and pine. 245

I.

And mind always that thou be good and  
true,  
And I will sing one song, of many new,  
For love of thee, as loud as I may cry; 248  
And then did she begin this song full  
high,  
"Beshrew all them that are in love  
untrue."

LI.

And soon as she had sung it to the end,  
Now farewell, quoth she, for I hence  
must wend;  
And, God of Love, that can right well  
and may,  
Send unto thee as mickle joy this day,  
As ever he to Lover yet did send. 255

LII.

Thus takes the Nightingale her leave of  
me;  
I pray to God with her always to be,  
And joy of love to send her evermore;  
And shield us from the Cuckoo and her  
lore,  
For there is not so false a bird as she. 260

LIII.

Forth then she flew, the gentle Nightin-  
gale,  
To all the Birds that lodged within that  
dale,  
And gathered each and all into one  
place;  
And them besought to hear her doleful  
case,  
And thus it was that she began her tale.

LIV.

The Cuckoo—'tis not well that I should  
hide 266  
How she and I did each the other chide,  
And without ceasing, since it was day-  
light;  
And now I pray you all to do me right  
Of that false Bird whom Love can not  
abide. 270

## LV.

Then spake one Bird, and full assent all  
gave;  
This matter asketh counsel good as grave,  
For birds we are—all here together  
brought;  
And, in good sooth, the Cuckoo here is  
not; 274  
And therefore we a Parliament will have.

## LVI.

And thereat shall the Eagle be our Lord,  
And other Peers whose names are on  
record;  
A summons to the Cuckoo shall be sent,  
And judgment there be given; or that  
intent  
Failing, we finally shall make accord. 280

## LVII.

And all this shall be done, without a nay,  
The morrow after Saint Valentine's day,  
Under a maple that is well beseen,  
Before the chamber-window of the Queen,  
At Woodstock, on the meadow green and  
gay. 285

## LVIII.

She thanked them; and then her leave  
she took,  
And flew into a hawthorn by that brook;  
And there she sate and sung—upon that  
tree—  
“For term of life Love shall have hold  
of me”—  
So loudly, that I with that song awoke.  
Unlearned Book and rude, as well I  
know, 291  
For beauty thou hast none, nor elo-  
quence,  
Who did on thee the hardness bestow  
To appear before my Lady? but a sense  
Thou surely hast of her benevolence, 295  
Whereof her hourly bearing proof doth  
give;  
For of all good she is the best alive.  
Alas, poor Book! for thy unworthiness,  
To show to her some pleasant meanings  
writ  
In winning words, since through her  
gentleness, 300

Thee she accepts as for her service fit!  
Oh! it repents me I have neither wit  
Nor leisure unto thee more worth to give;  
For of all good she is the best alive.

Beseech her meekly with all lowliness, 305  
Though I be far from her I reverence,  
To think upon my truth and steadfastness,  
And to abridge my sorrow's violence,  
Caused by the wish, as knows your  
sapience,

She of her liking proof to me would give;  
For of all good she is the best alive. 311

## L'ENVOY.

Pleasure's Aurora, Day of gladnessomeness!  
Luna by night, with heavenly influence  
Illumined! root of beauty and goodness,  
Write, and allay by your beneficence, 315  
My sighs breathed forth in silence,—  
comfort give!

Since of all good you are the best alive.

## EXPLICIT.

## III.

## TROILUS AND CRESIDA.

[Written 1801.—Same dates of publication as II.]

NEXT morning Troilus began to clear  
His eyes from sleep, at the first break of  
day,

And unto Pandarus, his own Brother dear,  
For love of God, full piteously did say,  
We must the Palace see of Cresida; 5  
For since we yet may have no other feast,  
Let us behold her Palace at the least!

And therewithal to cover his intent<sup>1</sup>  
A cause he found into the Town to go,  
And they right forth to Cresid's Palace  
went; 10

But, Lord, this simple Troilus was woe,  
Him thought his sorrowful heart would  
break in two;

For when he saw her doors fast bolted all,  
Well nigh for sorrow down he 'gan to fall.

Therewith when this true Lover 'gan 'fall  
behold, 15  
How shut was every window of the place,

<sup>1</sup> *His meiny for to blend* (Chaucer); i.e. to hoodwink his followers.—Ed.

Like frost he thought his heart was icy cold;  
 For which, with changèd, pale, and  
 deadly face,  
 Without word uttered, forth he 'gan to  
 pace;  
 And on his purpose bent so fast to ride,  
 That no wight his continuance<sup>1</sup> espied. 21

Then said he thus,—O Palace desolate!  
 O house of houses, once so richly dight!  
 O Palace empty and disconsolate!  
 Thou lamp of which extinguished is the  
 light; 25  
 O Palace whilom day that now art night,  
 Thou ought'st to fall and I to die; since she  
 Is gone who held us both in sovereignty.

O, of all houses once the crownèd boast!  
 Palace illumined with the sun of bliss; 30  
 O ring of which the ruby now is lost,  
 O cause of woe, that cause has been of  
 bliss:  
 Yet, since I may no better, would I kiss  
 Thy cold doors; but I dare not for this  
 rout;  
 Farewell, thou shrine of which the Saint  
 is out! 35

Therewith he cast on Pandarus an eye,  
 With changèd face, and piteous to be-  
 hold;  
 And when he might his time aright espy,  
 Aye as he rode, to Pandarus he told  
 Both his new sorrow and his joys of old,  
 So piteously, and with so dead a hue, 41  
 That every wight might on his sorrow rue.  
 Forth from the spot he rideth up and  
 down,  
 And everything to his remembrance  
 Came as he rode by places of the town 45  
 Where he had felt such perfect pleasure  
 once.

Lo, yonder saw I mine own Lady dance,  
 And in that Temple she with her bright  
 eyes,  
 My Lady dear, first bound me captive-  
 wise.

And yonder with joy-smitten heart have I  
 Heard my own Cressid's laugh; and once  
 at play 51

I yonder saw her eke full blissfully;  
 And yonder once she unto me 'gan say—  
 Now, my sweet Troilus, love me well, I  
 pray!

And there so graciously did me behold,  
 That hers unto the death my heart I  
 hold. 56

And at the corner of that self-same house  
 Heard I my most beloved Lady dear,  
 So womanly, with voice melodious 59  
 Singing so well, so goodly, and so clear,  
 That in my soul methinks I yet do hear  
 The blissful sound; and in that very  
 place  
 My Lady first me took unto her grace.

O blissful God of Love! then thus he  
 cried,

When I the process have in memory, 65  
 How thou hast wearied me on every side,  
 Men thence a book might make, a history;  
 What need to seek a conquest over me,  
 Since I am wholly at thy will? what joy  
 Hast thou thy own liege subjects to de-  
 stroy? 70

Dread Lord! so fearful when provoked,  
 thine ire

Well hast thou wreaked on me by pain  
 and grief;

Now mercy, Lord! thou know'st well I  
 desire

Thy grace above all pleasures first and  
 chief;

And live and die I will in thy belief; 75  
 For which I ask for guerdon but one  
 boon,

That Cressida again thou send me soon.

Constrain her heart as quickly to return,  
 As thou dost mine with longing her to see,  
 Then know I well that she would not  
 sojourn. 80

Now, blissful Lord, so cruel do not be  
 Unto the blood of Troy, I pray of thee,  
 As Juno was unto the Theban blood,  
 From whence to Thebes came griefs in  
 multitude.

And after this he to the gate did go 85  
 Whence Cressid rode, as if in haste she  
 was;

<sup>1</sup> *Countenance* (Chaucer).—Ed.

And up and down there went, and to  
and fro,  
And to himself full oft he said, alas!  
From hence my hope and solace forth  
did pass.

O would the blissful God now for his joy,  
I might her see again coming to Troy! 91

And up to yonder hill was I her guide;  
Alas, and there I took of her my leave;  
Yonder I saw her to her Father ride,  
For very grief of which my heart shall  
cleave;— 95

And hither home I came when it was eve;  
And here I dwell an outcast from all joy,  
And shall, unless I see her soon in Troy.

And of himself did he imagine oft,  
That he was blighted, pale, and waxen less  
Than he was wont; and that in whispers  
soft 101

Men said, what may it be, can no one  
guess

Why Troilus hath all this heaviness?  
All which he of himself conceived wholly  
Out of his weakness and his melancholy.

Another time he took into his head, 106  
That every wight, who in the way passed  
by,

Had of him ruth, and fancied that they  
said,

I am right sorry Troilus will die:  
And thus a day or two drove wearily; 110  
As ye have heard; such life 'gan he to  
lead

As one that standeth betwixt hope and  
dread.

For which it pleased him in his songs to  
show

The occasion of his woe, as best he might;  
And made a fitting song, of words but  
few, 115

Somewhat his woeful heart to make more  
light;

And when he was removed from all men's  
sight,

With a soft voice, he of his Lady dear,  
That absent was, 'gan sing as ye may hear.

O star, of which I lost have all the light, 120  
With a sore heart well ought I to bewail,

That ever dark in torment, night by night,  
Toward my death with wind I steer and  
sail<sup>1</sup>;

For which upon the tenth night if thou fail  
With thy bright beams to guide me but  
one hour, 125  
My ship and me Charybdis will devour.

As soon as he this song had thus sung  
through,

He fell again into his sorrows old;  
And every night, as was his wont to do,  
Troilus stood the bright moon to behold;  
And all his trouble to the moon he told, 131  
And said: I wis, when thou art horn'd  
anew,

I shall be glad if all the world be true.

Thy horns were old as now upon that  
morrow,

When hence did journey my bright Lady  
dear, 135

That cause is of my torment and my  
sorrow;

For which, oh, gentle Luna, bright and  
clear,

For love of God, run fast above thy sphere;  
For when thy horns begin once more to  
spring,

Then shall she come, that with her bliss  
may bring. 140

The day is more, and longer every night  
Than they were wont to be—for he  
thought so;

And that the sun did take his course not  
right,

By longer way than he was wont to go;  
And said, I am in constant dread I trow,  
That Phæton his son is yet alive, 146  
His too fond father's car amies to drive.

Upon the walls fast also would he walk,  
To the end that he the Grecian host might  
see; 149

And ever thus he to himself would talk:—  
Lo! yonder is my own bright Lady free;  
Or yonder is it that the tents must be;  
And thence does come this air which is so  
sweet,

That in my soul I feel the joy of it.

<sup>1</sup> With wind in stern I sail (Chaucer).—Ed.

And certainly this wind, that more and  
 more 155  
 By moments thus increaseth in my  
 face,  
 Is of my Lady's sighs heavy and sore;  
 I prove it thus; for in no other space  
 Of all this town, save only in this place,  
 Feel I a wind, that soundeth so like  
 pain; 160  
 It saith, Alas, why severed are we  
 twain?

A weary while in pain he tosseth thus,  
 Till fully passed and gone was the ninth  
 night;  
 And ever at his side stood Pandarus,  
 Who busily made use of all his might 165  
 To comfort him, and make his heart more  
 light;  
 Giving him always hope, that she the  
 morrow  
 Of the tenth day will come, and end his  
 sorrow.

# POEMS REFERRING TO THE PERIOD OF OLD AGE.

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## I.

### THE OLD CUMBERLAND BEGGAR.

The class of Beggars, to which the Old Man here described belongs, will probably soon be extinct. It consisted of poor, and, mostly, old and infirm persons, who confined themselves to a stated round in their neighbourhood, and had certain fixed days, on which, at different houses, they regularly received alms, sometimes in money, but mostly in provisions.

[Composed 1797.—Published 1800.]

I saw an aged Beggar in my walk;  
And he was seated, by the highway side,  
On a low structure of rude masonry  
Built at the foot of a huge hill, that they  
Who lead their horses down the steep  
rough road 5  
May thence remount at ease. The aged  
Man  
Had placed his staff across the broad  
smooth stone  
That overlays the pile; and, from a bag  
All white with flour, the dole of village  
dames,  
He drew his scraps and fragments, one  
by one; 10  
And scanned them with a fixed and  
serious look  
Of idle computation. In the sun,  
Upon the second step of that small pile,  
Surrounded by those wild unpeopled hills,  
He sat, and ate his food in solitude: 15  
And ever, scattered from his palsied hand,  
That, still attempting to prevent the  
waste,  
Was baffled still, the crumbs in little  
showers  
Fell on the ground; and the small moun-  
tain birds,

Not venturing yet to peck their destined  
meal, 20  
Approached within the length of half his  
staff.

Him from my childhood have I known;  
and then  
He was so old, he seems not older now;  
He travels on, a solitary Man,  
So helpless in appearance, that for him 25  
The sauntering Horseman throws not  
with a slack  
And careless hand his alms upon the  
ground,  
But stops,—that he may safely lodge the  
coin  
Within the old Man's hat; nor quits  
him so,  
But still, when he has given his horse the  
rein, 30  
Watches the aged Beggar with a look  
Sidelong, and half-reverted. She who  
tends  
The toll-gate, when in summer at her  
door  
She turns her wheel, if on the road she  
sees  
The aged Beggar coming, quits her work,  
And lifts the latch for him that he may  
pass. 36  
The post-boy, when his rattling wheels  
o'ertake  
The aged Beggar in the woody lane,  
Shouts to him from behind; and, if thus  
warned  
The old man does not change his course,  
the boy 40  
Turns with less noisy wheels to the road-  
side,  
And passes gently by, without a curse  
Upon his lips or anger at his heart.

He travels on, a solitary Man ;  
 His age has no companion. On the  
     ground 45  
 His eyes are turned, and, as he moves  
     along,  
*They* move along the ground ; and, ever-  
     more,  
 Instead of common and habitual sight  
 Of fields with rural works, of hill and  
     dale,  
 And the blue sky, one little span of earth  
 Is all his prospect. Thus, from day to  
     day, 51  
 Bow-bent, his eyes for ever on the ground,  
 He plies his weary journey ; seeing still,  
 And seldom knowing that he sees, some  
     straw,  
 Some scattered leaf, or marks which, in  
     one track, 55  
 The nails of cart or chariot-wheel have  
     left  
 Impressed on the white road,—in the  
     same line,  
 At distance still the same. Poor Tra-  
     veller !  
 His staff trails with him ; scarcely do his  
     feet  
 Disturb the summer dust ; he is so still 60  
 In look and motion, that the cottage curs,  
 Ere he has passed the door, will turn  
     away,  
 Weary of barking at him. Boys and girls,  
 The vacant and the busy, maids and  
     youths,  
 And urchins newly breeched—all pass  
     him by : 65  
 Him even the slow-paced waggon leaves  
     behind.

But deem not this Man useless.—States-  
     men ! ye  
 Who are so restless in your wisdom, ye  
 Who have a broom still ready in your  
     hands  
 To rid the world of nuisances ; ye proud,  
 Heart-swoln, while in your pride ye con-  
     template 71  
 Your talents, power, or wisdom, deem  
     him not  
 A burthen of the earth ! 'Tis Nature's law  
 That none, the meanest of created things,

Of forms created the most vile and  
     brute, 75  
 The dulllest or most noxious, should exist  
 Divorced from good—a spirit and pulse  
     of good,  
 A life and soul, to every mode of being  
 Inseparably linked. Then be assured  
 That least of all can aught—that ever  
     owned 80  
 The heaven-regarding eye and front sub-  
     lime  
 Which man is born to—sink, howe'er de-  
     pressed,  
 So low as to be scorned without a sin ;  
 Without offence to God cast out of view ;  
 Like the dry remnant of a garden-flower 85  
 Whose seeds are shed, or as an implement  
 Worn out and worthless. While from  
     door to door,  
 This old Man creeps, the villagers in him  
 Behold a record which together binds  
 Past deeds and offices of charity, 90  
 Else unremembered, and so keeps alive  
 The kindly mood in hearts which lapse of  
     years,  
 And that half-wisdom half-experience  
     gives,  
 Make slow to feel, and by sure steps  
     resign  
 To selfishness and cold oblivious cares. 95  
 Among the farms and solitary huts,  
 Hamlets and thinly-scattered villages,  
 Where'er the aged Beggar takes his  
     rounds,  
 The mild necessity of use compels  
 To acts of love ; and habit does the work  
 Of reason ; yet prepares that after-joy  
 Which reason cherishes. And thus the  
     soul, 102  
 By that sweet taste of pleasure unpursued,  
 Doth find herself insensibly disposed  
 To virtue and true goodness.

Some there are,  
 By their good works exalted, lofty minds,  
 And meditative, authors of delight  
 And happiness, which to the end of time  
 Will live, and spread, and kindle : even  
     such minds  
 In childhood, from this solitary Being, 110  
 Or from like wanderer, haply have re-  
     ceived

(A thing more precious far than all that  
books  
Or the solicitudes of love can do !)  
That first mild touch of sympathy and  
thought,  
In which they found their kindred with  
a world 115  
Where want and sorrow were. The easy  
man  
Who sits at his own door,—and, like the  
pear  
That overhangs his head from the green  
wall,  
Feeds in the sunshine; the robust and  
young,  
The prosperous and unthinking, they who  
live 120  
Sheltered, and flourish in a little grove  
Of their own kindred ;—all behold in him  
A silent monitor, which on their minds  
Must needs impress a transitory thought  
Of self-congratulation, to the heart 125  
Of each recalling his peculiar boons,  
His charters and exemptions; and, per-  
chance,  
Though he to no one give the fortitude  
And circumspection needful to preserve  
His present blessings, and to husband up  
The respite of the season, he, at least, 131  
And 'tis no vulgar service, makes them  
felt.

Yet further.—Many, I believe, there  
are  
Who live a life of virtuous decency,  
Men who can hear the Decalogue and  
feel 135  
No self-reproach; who of the moral law  
Established in the land where they abide  
Are strict observers; and not negligent  
In acts of love to those with whom they  
dwell,  
Their kindred, and the children of their  
blood. 140  
Praise be to such, and to their slumbers  
peace!  
—But of the poor man ask, the abject  
poor;  
Go, and demand of him, if there be here  
In this cold abstinence from evil deeds,  
And these inevitable charities, 145

Wherewith to satisfy the human soul?  
No—man is dear to man; the poorest poor  
Long for some moments in a weary life  
When they can know and feel that they  
have been,  
Themselves, the fathers and the dealers-  
out 150  
Of some small blessings; have been kind  
to such  
As needed kindness, for this single cause,  
That we have all of us one human heart.  
—Such pleasure is to one kind Being  
known,  
My neighbour, when with punctual care,  
each week, 155  
Duly as Friday comes, though pressed  
herself  
By her own wants, she from her store of  
meal  
Takes one unsparing handful for the scrip  
Of this old Mendicant, and, from her door  
Returning with exhilarated heart, 160  
Sits by her fire, and builds her hope in  
heaven.

Then let him pass, a blessing on his  
head!  
And while in that vast solitude to which  
The tide of things has borne him, he  
appears 164  
To breathe and live but for himself alone,  
Unblamed, uninjured, let him bear about  
The good which the benignant law of  
Heaven  
Has hung around him: and, while life is  
his,  
Still let him prompt the unlettered vil-  
lagers  
To tender offices and pensive thoughts.  
—Then let him pass, a blessing on his  
head! 171  
And, long as he can wander, let him  
breathe  
The freshness of the valleys; let his blood  
Struggle with frosty air and winter snows;  
And let the chartered wind that sweeps  
the heath 175  
Beat his grey locks against his withered  
face.  
Reverence the hope whose vital anxious-  
ness

Gives the last human interest to his heart.  
May never HOUSE, misnamed of INDUSTRY,

Make him a captive!—for that pent-up  
din, 180

Those life-consuming sounds that clog the  
air,

Be his the natural silence of old age!  
Let him be free of mountain solitudes;  
And have around him, whether heard or  
not,

The pleasant melody of woodland birds.  
Few are his pleasures: if his eyes have  
now 186

Been doomed so long to settle upon earth  
That not without some effort they behold  
The countenance of the horizontal sun,  
Rising or setting, let the light at least  
Find a free entrance to their languid  
orbs, 191

And let him, *where and when* he will, sit  
down

Beneath the trees, or on a grassy bank  
Of highway side, and with the little birds  
Share his chance-gathered meal; and,  
finally, 195

As in the eye of Nature he has lived,  
So in the eye of Nature let him die!

## II.

### THE FARMER OF TILSBURY VALE.

[Composed 1800.—Published July 21, 1800 (*Morning Post*); ed. 1815.]

'Tis not for the unfeeling, the falsely  
refined,

The squeamish in taste, and the narrow  
of mind,

And the small critic wielding his delicate  
pen, •

That I sing of old Adam, the pride of old  
men.

He dwells in the centre of London's wide  
Town; 5

His staff is a sceptre—his grey hairs a  
crown;

And his bright eyes look brighter, set off  
by the streak

Of the unfaded rose that still blooms on  
his cheek.

'Mid the dews, in the sunshine of morn,—  
'mid the joy

Of the fields, he collected that bloom,  
when a boy; 10

That countenance there fashioned, which,  
spite of a stain

That his life hath received, to the last  
will remain.

A Farmer he was; and his house far and  
near

Was the boast of the country for excellent  
cheer;

How oft have I heard in sweet Tilsbury  
Vale 15

Of the silver-rimmed horn whence he  
dealt his mild ale!

Yet Adam was far as the farthest from  
ruin,

His fields seemed to know what their  
Master was doing;

And turnips, and corn-land, and meadow,  
and lea,

All caught the infection—as generous as  
he. 20

Yet Adam prized little the feast and the  
bowl,—

The fields better suited the ease of his  
soul:

He strayed through the fields like an  
indolent wight,

The quiet of nature was Adam's delight.

For Adam was simple in thought; and  
the poor, 25

Familiar with him, made an inn of his  
door:

He gave them the best that he had; or,  
to say

What less may mislead you, they took it  
away.

Thus thirty smooth years did he thrive  
on his farm:

The Genius of plenty preserved him from  
harm: 30

At length, what to most is a season of  
sorrow,

His means are run out,—he must beg, or  
must borrow.

To the neighbours he went,—all were free  
with their money;  
For his hive had so long been replenished  
with honey,

That they dreamt not of dearth;—He  
continued his rounds, 35  
Knocked here—and knocked there, pounds  
still adding to pounds.

He paid what he could with his ill-gotten  
pelf,  
And something, it might be, reserved for  
himself:  
Then (what is too true) without hinting a  
word,  
Turned his back on the country—and off  
like a bird. 40

You lift up your eyes!—but I guess that  
you frame  
A judgment too harsh of the sin and the  
shame;  
In him it was scarcely a business of art,  
For this he did all in the *case* of his  
heart.

To London—a sad emigration I ween—  
With his grey hairs he went from the  
brook and the green; 46  
And there, with small wealth but his legs  
and his hands,  
As lonely he stood as a crow on the sands.

All trades, as need was, did old Adam  
assume,—  
Served as stable-boy, errand-boy, porter,  
and groom; 50  
But nature is gracious, necessity kind,  
And, in spite of the shame that may lurk  
in his mind,

He seems ten birthdays younger, is green  
and is stout;  
Twice as fast as before does his blood run  
about;  
You would say that each hair of his beard  
was alive, 55  
And his fingers as busy as bees in a hive.

For he's not like an Old Man that leisure-  
ly goes  
About work that he knows, in a track  
that he knows;

But often his mind is compelled to demur,  
And you guess that the more then his  
body must stir. 60

In the throng of the town like a stranger  
is he,  
Like one whose own country's far over  
the sea;  
And Nature, while through the great city  
he hies,  
Full ten times a day takes his heart by  
surprise.

This gives him the fancy of one that is  
young, 65  
More of soul in his face than of words on  
his tongue;  
Like a maiden of twenty he trembles and  
sighs,  
And tears of fifteen will come into his  
eyes.

What's a tempest to him, or the dry  
parching heats?  
Yet he watches the clouds that pass over  
the streets; 70  
With a look of such earnestness often will  
stand,  
You might think he'd twelve reapers at  
work in the Strand.

Where proud Covent-garden, in desolate  
hours  
Of snow and hoar-frost, spreads her fruits  
and her flowers,  
Old Adam will smile at the pains that  
have made 75  
Poor winter look fine in such strange  
masquerade.

'Mid coaches and chariots, a waggon of  
straw, 8  
Like a magnet, the heart of old Adam  
can draw;  
With a thousand soft pictures his memory  
will teem,  
And his hearing is touched with the  
sounds of a dream. 80

Up the Haymarket hill he oft whistles his  
way,  
Thrusts his hands in a waggon, and smells  
at the hay;

He thinks of the fields he so often hath  
mown,  
And is happy as if the rich freight were  
his own.  
But chiefly to Smithfield he loves to re-  
pair,— 85  
If you pass by at morning, you'll meet  
with him there.  
The breath of the cows you may see him  
inhale,  
And his heart all the while is in Tilsbury  
Vale.  
Now farewell, old Adam! when low thou  
art laid,  
May one blade of grass spring up over  
thy head; 90  
And I hope that thy grave, wheresoever  
it be,  
Will hear the wind sigh through the leaves  
of a tree.

## III.

## THE SMALL CELANDINE.

[Composed 1804.—Published 1807.]

THERE is a Flower, the lesser Celandine,  
That shrinks, like many more, from cold  
and rain;  
And, the first moment that the sun may  
shine,  
Bright as the sun himself, 'tis out again!  
When hailstones have been falling, swarm  
on swarm, 5  
Or blasts the green field and the trees dis-  
trest,  
Oft have I seen it muffled up from harm,  
In close self-shelter, like a Thing at rest.  
But lately, one rough day, this Flower I  
passed  
And recognised it, though an altered  
form, 10  
Now standing forth an offering to the  
blast,  
And buffeted at will by rain and storm.  
I stopped, and said with inly-muttered  
voice,  
"It doth not love the shower, nor seek  
the cold:

This neither is its courage nor its choice,  
But its necessity in being old. 16

"The sunshine may not cheer it, nor the  
dew;  
It cannot help itself in its decay;  
Stiff in its members, withered, changed  
of hue."  
And, in my spleen, I smiled that it was  
grey. 20

To be a Prodigal's Favourite—then, worse  
truth,  
A Miser's Pensioner—behold our lot!  
O Man, that from thy fair and shining  
youth  
Age might but take the things Youth  
needed not!

## IV.

## THE TWO THIEVES;

OR,

## THE LAST STAGE OF AVARICE.

[Composed 1800.—Published 1800.]

O now that the genius of Bewick were  
mine,  
And the skill which he learned on the  
banks of the Tyne,  
Then the Muses might deal with me just  
as they chose,  
For I'd take my last leave both of verse  
and of prose.  
What feats would I work with my magical  
hand! 5  
Book-learning and books should be  
banished the land:  
And, for hunger and thirst and such  
troublesome calls,  
Every ale-house should then have a feast  
on its walls.  
The traveller would hang his wet clothes  
on a chair;  
Let them smoke, let them burn, not a  
straw would he care! 10  
For the Prodigal Son, Joseph's Dream  
and his sheaves,  
Oh, what would they be to my tale of two  
Thieves?

The One, yet unbreeched, is not three  
birthdays old,  
His Grandsire that age more than thirty  
times told ;  
There are ninety good seasons of fair and  
foul weather 15  
Between them, and both go a-pilfering  
together.

With chips is the carpenter strewing his  
floor?  
Is a cart-load of turf at an old woman's  
door?  
Old Daniel his hand to the treasure will  
slide !  
And his Grandson's as busy at work by  
his side. 20

Old Daniel begins ; he stops short—and  
his eye,  
Through the lost look of dotage, is cunning  
and sly :  
'Tis a look which at this time is hardly  
his own,  
But tells a plain tale of the days that are  
flown.

He once had a heart which was moved by  
the wires 25  
Of manifold pleasures and many desires :  
And what if he cherished his purse?  
'Twas no more  
Than treading a path trod by thousands  
before.

'Twas a path trod by thousands ; but  
Daniel is one  
Who went something farther than others  
have gone, 30  
And now with old Daniel you see how it  
fares ;  
You see to what end he has brought his  
grey hairs.

The pair sally forth hand in hand : ere  
the sun  
Has peered o'er the beeches, their work is  
begun :  
And yet, into whatever sin they may  
fall, 35  
This child but half knows it, and that not  
at all.

They hunt through the streets with de-  
liberate tread,  
And each, in his turn, becomes leader or  
led ;  
And, wherever they carry their plots and  
their wiles,  
Every face in the village is dimpled with  
smiles. 40

Neither checked by the rich nor the needy  
they roam ;  
For the grey-headed Sire has a daughter  
at home,  
Who will gladly repair all the damage  
that's done ;  
And three, were it asked, would be ren-  
dered for one.

Old Man ! whom so oft I with pity have  
eyed, 45  
I love thee, and love the sweet Boy at thy  
side :  
Long yet may'st thou live ! for a teacher  
we see  
That lifts up the veil of our nature in thee.

## V.

ANIMAL TRANQUILLITY AND  
DECAY.

[Composed 1798 (? 1797).—Published 1798.]

THE little hedgerow birds,  
That peck along the road, regard him  
not.  
He travels on, and in his face, his step,  
His gait, is one expression : every limb,  
His look and bending figure, all bespeak  
A man who does not move with pain, but  
moves 6  
With thought.—He is insensibly subdued  
To settled quiet : he is one by whom  
All effort seems forgotten ; one to whom  
Long patience hath such mild composure  
given, 10  
That patience now doth seem a thing of  
which  
He hath no need. He is by nature led  
To peace so perfect that the young behold  
With envy, what the Old Man hardly  
feels.

# EPITAPHS AND ELEGIAC PIECES.

## EPITAPHS

TRANSLATED FROM CHIABRERA.

### I.

[Composed ?.—Published 1837.]

WEEP not, beloved Friends! nor let the  
air  
For me with sighs be troubled. Not from  
life

Have I been taken; this is genuine life  
And this alone—the life which now I live  
In peace eternal; where desire and joy  
Together move in fellowship without  
end.—

Francesco Ceni willed that, after death,  
His tombstone thus should speak for him.  
And surely

Small cause there is for that fond wish of  
ours

Long to continue in this world; a world  
That keeps not faith, nor yet can point a  
hope

To good, whereof itself is destitute. II

### II.

[Composed 1809 or 1810.—Published February 22,  
1810 (*The Friend*); ed. 1815.]

PERHAPS some needful service of the State  
Drew TITUS from the depth of studious  
bowers,

And doomed him to contend in faithless  
courts, •

Where gold determines between right and  
wrong.

Yet did at length his loyalty of heart  
And his pure native genius, lead him  
back

To wait upon the bright and gracious  
Muses,

Whom he had early loved. And not in  
vain

Such course he held! Bologna's learned  
schools

Were gladdened by the Sage's voice, and  
hung 10

With fondness on those sweet Nestorian  
strains.

There pleasure crowned his days; and all  
his thoughts

A roseate fragrance breathed<sup>1</sup>.—O human  
life,

That never art secure from dolorous  
change!

Behold a high injunction suddenly 15  
To Arno's side hath brought him, and he  
charmed

A Tuscan audience: but full soon was  
called

To the perpetual silence of the grave.  
Mourn, Italy, the loss of him who stood  
A Champion steadfast and invincible, 20  
To quell the rage of literary War!

### III.

[Composed 1809 or 1810.—Published February 22,  
1810 (*The Friend*); ed. 1815.]

O THOU who movest onward with a mind  
Intent upon thy way, pause, though in  
haste!

'Twill be no fruitless moment. I was  
born

Within Savona's walls, of gentle blood.  
On Tiber's banks my youth was dedicate  
To sacred studies; and the Roman Shep-  
herd 6

Gave to my charge Urbino's numerous  
flock.

Well did I watch, much laboured, nor  
had power

To escape from many and strange indig-  
nities;

---

<sup>1</sup> Ivi vivea giocondo e i suoi pensieri  
Erano tutti rose.

The Translator had not skill to come nearer  
to his original.

Was smitten by the great ones of the world, 10  
 But did not fall; for Virtue braves all shocks,  
 Upon herself resting immovably.  
 Me did a kindlier fortune then invite  
 To serve the glorious Henry, King of France,  
 And in his hands I saw a high reward 15  
 Stretched out for my acceptance,—but Death came.  
 Now, Reader, learn from this my fate, how false,  
 How treacherous to her promise, is the world;  
 And trust in God—to whose eternal doom  
 Must bend the sceptred Potentates of earth. 20

## IV.

[Composed 1809.—Published December 28, 1809  
 (*The Friend*); ed. 1815.]

THERE never breathed a man who, when his life  
 Was closing, might not of that life relate  
 Toils long and hard.—The warrior will report  
 Of wounds, and bright swords flashing in the field,  
 And blast of trumpets. He who hath been doomed 5  
 To bow his forehead in the courts of kings,  
 Will tell of fraud and never-ceasing hate,  
 Envy and heart-inquietude, derived  
 From intricate cabals of treacherous friends.  
 I, who on shipboard lived from earliest youth, 10  
 Could represent the countenance horrible  
 Of the vexed waters, and the indignant rage  
 Of Austet and Boötes. Fifty years  
 Over the well-steered galleys did I rule:—  
 From huge Pelorus to the Atlantic pillars, 15  
 Rises no mountain to mine eyes unknown;  
 And the broad gulfs I traversed oft and oft.  
 Of every cloud which in the heavens  
 might stir

I knew the force; and hence the rough sea's pride  
 Aailed not to my Vessel's overthrow. 20  
 What noble pomp and frequent have not I  
 On regal decks beheld! yet in the end  
 I learned that one poor moment can suffice  
 To equalize the lofty and the low.  
 We sail the sea of life—a *Calm* One finds, 25  
 And One a *Tempest*—and, the voyage o'er,  
 Death is the quiet haven of us all.  
 If more of my condition ye would know,  
 Savona was my birthplace, and I sprang  
 Of noble parents: seventy years and three  
 Lived I—then yielded to a slow disease.

## V.

[Composed ?.—Published 1837.]

TRUE is it that Ambrosio Salinero  
 With an untoward fate was long involved  
 In odious litigation; and full long,  
 Fate harder still! had he to endure assaults  
 Of racking malady. And true it is 5  
 That not the less a frank courageous heart  
 And buoyant spirit triumphed over pain;  
 And he was strong to follow in the steps  
 Of the fair Muses. Not a covert path  
 Leads to the dear Parnassian forest's shade,  
 That might from him be hidden; not a track 11  
 Mounts to pellucid Hippocrene, but he  
 Had traced its windings.—This Savona knows,  
 Yet no sepulchral honours to her Son  
 She paid, for in our age the heart is ruled  
 Only by gold. And now a simple stone  
 Inscribed with this memorial here is raised 17  
 By his bereft, his lonely, Chiabrera.  
 Think not, O Passenger! who read'st the lines  
 That an exceeding love hath dazzled me;  
 No—he was One whose memory ought to spread 21  
 Where'er Permessus bears an honoured name,  
 And live as long as its pure stream shall flow.

## VI.

[Composed 1809.—Published December 28, 1809  
(*The Friend*); ed. 1815.]

DESTINED to war from very infancy  
Was I, Roberto Dati, and I took  
In Malta the white symbol of the Cross:  
Nor in life's vigorous season did I shun  
Hazard or toil; among the sands was seen  
Of Lybia; and not seldom, on the banks 6  
Of wide Hungarian Danube, 'twas my lot  
To hear the sanguinary trumpet sounded.  
So lived I, and repined not at such fate:  
This only grieves me, for it seems a  
wrong, 10  
That stripped of arms I to my end am  
brought  
On the soft down of my paternal home.  
Yet haply Arno shall be spared all cause  
To blush for me. Thou, loiter not nor halt  
In thy appointed way, and bear in mind  
How fleeting and how frail is human life!

## VII.

[Composed ?.—Published 1837.]

O FLOWER of all that springs from gentle  
blood,  
And all that generous nurture breeds to  
make  
Youth amiable; O friend so true of soul  
To fair Aglaia; by what envy moved,  
Lelius! has death cut short thy brilliant  
day 5  
In its sweet opening? and what dire  
mishap  
Has from Savona torn her best delight?  
For thee she mourns, nor e'er will cease  
to mourn;  
And, should the out-pourings of her eyes  
suffice not  
For her heart's grief, she will entreat  
Sebeto 10  
Not to withhold his bounteous aid, Sebeto  
Who saw thee, on his margin, yield to  
death,  
In the chaste arms of thy beloved Love!  
What profit riches? what does youth  
avail?  
Dust are our hopes;—I, weeping bitterly,  
Penned these sad lines, nor can forbear  
to pray 16

That every gentle Spirit hither led  
May read them not without some bitter  
tears.

## VIII.

[Composed 1809.—Published January 4, 1810  
(*The Friend*); ed. 1815.]

Nor without heavy grief of heart did He  
On whom the duty fell (for at that time  
The father sojourned in a distant land)  
Deposit in the hollow of this tomb  
A brother's Child, most tenderly beloved!  
FRANCESCO was the name the Youth had  
borne, 6  
POZZOBONNELLI his illustrious house;  
And, when beneath this stone the Corse  
was laid,  
The eyes of all Savona streamed with tears.  
Alas! the twentieth April of his life 10  
Had scarcely flowered: and at this early  
time,  
By genuine virtue he inspired a hope  
That greatly cheered his country: to his  
kin  
He promised comfort; and the flattering  
thoughts  
His friends had in their fondness enter-  
tained<sup>1</sup>, 15  
He suffered not to languish or decay.  
Now is there not good reason to break forth  
Into a passionate lament?—O Soul!  
Short while a Pilgrim in our nether world,  
Do thou enjoy the calm empyreal air; 20  
And round this earthly tomb let roses rise,  
An everlasting spring! in memory  
Of that delightful fragrance which was  
once  
From thy mild manners quietly exhaled.

## IX.

[Composed 1809.—Published January 4, 1810  
(*The Friend*); ed. 1815.]

PAUSE, courteous Spirit!—Baldi suppli-  
cates  
That Thou, with no reluctant voice, for  
him

<sup>1</sup> In justice to the Author, I subjoin the original:

— e degl' amici  
Non lasciava languire i bei pensieri.

Here laid in mortal darkness, wouldst  
prefer

A prayer to the Redeemer of the world.  
This to the dead by sacred right belongs;  
All else is nothing.—Did occasion suit 6  
To tell his worth, the marble of this tomb  
Would ill suffice: for Plato's lore sublime,  
And all the wisdom of the Stagyrice,  
Enriched and beautified his studious  
mind: 10

With Archimedes also he conversed  
As with a chosen friend; nor did he leave  
Those laureat wreaths ungathered which  
the Nymphs

Twine near their loved Permessus.—  
Finally,  
Himself above each lower thought up-  
lifting, 15

His ears he closed to listen to the songs  
Which Zion's Kings did consecrate of  
old;

And his Permessus found on Lebanon.  
A blessed Man! who of protracted days  
Made not, as thousands do, a vulgar  
sleep; 20

But truly did *He* live his life. Urbino,  
Take pride in him!—O Passenger, fare-  
well!

## I.

[Composed ?.—Published 1835.]

By a blest Husband guided, Mary came  
From nearest kindred, Vernon her new  
name;

She came, though meek of soul, in seemly  
pride

Of happiness and hope, a youthful Bride.  
O dread reverse! if aught *be* so, which  
proves 5

That God will chasten whom he dearly  
loves.

Faith bore her up through pains in mercy  
given,

And troubles that were each a step to  
Heaven:

Two Babes were laid in earth before she  
died;

A third now slumbers at the Mother's  
side; 10

Its Sister-twin survives, whose smiles  
afford

A trembling solace to her widowed Lord.

Reader! if to thy bosom cling the pain  
Of recent sorrow combated in vain;  
Or if thy cherished grief have failed to  
thwart 15

Time still intent on his insidious part,  
Lulling the mourner's best good thoughts  
asleep,

Pilfering regrets we would, but cannot,  
keep;

Bear with Him—judge *Him* gently who  
makes known

His bitter loss by this memorial Stone; 20  
And pray that in his faithful breast the  
grace

Of resignation find a hallowed place.

## II.

[Composed 1812 (?).—Published 1837.]

SIX months to six years added he re-  
mained

Upon this sinful earth, by sin unstained:  
O blessed Lord! whose mercy then re-  
moved

A Child whom every eye that looked on  
loved;

Support us, teach us calmly to resign  
What we possessed, and now is wholly  
thine!

## III.

## CENOTAPH.

In affectionate remembrance of Frances Fermor,  
whose remains are deposited in the church of  
Claines, near Worcester, this stone is erected  
by her sister, Dame Margaret, wife of Sir George  
Beaumont, Bart., who, feeling not less than the  
love of a brother for the deceased, commends  
this memorial to the care of his heirs and suc-  
cessors in the possession of this place.

[Composed 1824.—Published 1842.]

By vain affections unenthralled,  
Though resolute when duty called  
To meet the world's broad eye,  
Pure as the holiest cloistered nun  
That ever feared the tempting sun, 5  
Did Fermor live and die.

This Tablet, hallowed by her name,  
One heart-relieving tear may claim;  
But if the pensive gloom  
Of fond regret be still thy choice, 10  
Exalt thy spirit, hear the voice  
Of Jesus from her tomb!

"I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE."

IV.

EPITAPH

IN THE CHAPEL-YARD OF LANGDALE,  
WESTMORELAND.

[Composed 1841.—Published: vol. of 1842.]

By playful smiles, (alas! too oft  
A sad heart's sunshine) by a soft  
And gentle nature, and a free  
Yet modest hand of charity,  
Through life was OWEN LLOYD endeared 5  
To young and old; and how revered  
Had been that pious spirit, a tide  
Of humble mourners testified,  
When, after pains dispensed to prove  
The measure of God's chastening love, 10  
Here, brought from far, his corse found  
rest,—

Fulfilment of his own request;—  
Urged less for this Yew's shade, though he  
Planted with such fond hope the tree;  
Less for the love of stream and rock, 15  
Dear as they were, than that his Flock,  
When they no more their Pastor's voice  
Could hear to guide them in their choice  
Through good and evil, help might have,  
Admonished, from his silent grave, 20  
Of righteousness, of sins forgiven,  
For peace on earth and bliss in heaven.

V.

ADDRESS TO THE SCHOLARS OF  
THE VILLAGE SCHOOL OF —.

[Composed 1798.—Published: vol. of 1842.]

I COME, ye little noisy Crew,  
Not long your pastime to prevent;  
I heard the blessing which to you  
Our common Friend and Father sent.  
I kissed his cheek before he died; 5  
And when his breath was fled,

I raised, while kneeling by his side,  
His hand:—it dropped like lead.  
Your hands, dear Little-ones, do all  
That can be done, will never fall 10  
Like his till they are dead.  
By night or day, blow foul or fair,  
Ne'er will the best of all your train  
Play with the locks of his white hair,  
Or stand between his knees again. 15

Here did he sit confined for hours;  
But he could see the woods and plains,  
Could hear the wind and mark the showers  
Come streaming down the streaming  
panes.  
Now stretched beneath his grass-green  
mound 20

He rests a prisoner of the ground.  
He loved the breathing air,  
He loved the sun, but if it rise  
Or set, to him where now he lies,  
Brings not a moment's care. 25  
Alas! what idle words; but take  
The Dirge which for our Master's sake  
And yours, love prompted me to make.  
The rhymes so homely in attire  
With learned ears may ill agree, 30  
But chanted by your Orphan Quire  
Will make a touching melody.

DIRGE.

Mourn, Shepherd, near thy old grey stone;  
Thou Angler, by the silent flood;  
And mourn when thou art all alone, 35  
Thou Woodman, in the distant wood!

Thou one blind Sailor, rich in joy  
Though blind, thy tunes in sadness hum;  
And mourn, thou poor half-witted Boy!  
Born deaf, and living deaf and dumb. 40

Thou drooping sick Man, bless the Guide  
Who checked or turned thy headstrong  
youth,

As he before had sanctified  
Thy infancy with heavenly truth.

Ye Striplings, light of heart and gay, 45  
Bold settlers on some foreign shore,  
Give, when your thoughts are turned this  
way,  
A sigh to him whom we deplore.

For us who here in funeral strain  
With one accord our voices raise,  
Let sorrow overcharged with pain  
Be lost in thankfulness and praise.

And when our hearts shall feel a sting  
From ill we meet or good we miss,  
May touches of his memory bring  
Fond healing, like a mother's kiss.

BY THE SIDE OF THE GRAVE SOME  
YEARS AFTER.

LONG time his pulse hath ceased to beat;  
But benefits, his gift, we trace—  
Expressed in every eye we meet  
Round this dear Vale, his native place. 60

To stately Hall and Cottage rude  
Flowed from his life what still they hold,  
Light pleasures, every day renewed;  
And blessings half a century old.

Oh true of heart, of spirit gay, 65  
Thy faults, where not already gone  
From memory, prolong their stay  
For charity's sweet sake alone.

Such solace find we for our loss;  
And what beyond this thought we crave  
Comes in the promise from the Cross, 71  
Shining upon thy happy grave<sup>1</sup>.

VI.

ELEGIAC STANZAS,

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF PEELE  
CASTLE, IN A STORM, PAINTED BY  
SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT.

[Composed 1805.—Published 1807.]

I WAS thy neighbour once, thou rugged  
Pile!

Four summer weeks I dwelt in sight of  
thee:

I saw thee every day; and all the while  
Thy Form was sleeping on a glassy sea.

So pure the sky, so quiet was the air! 5  
So like, so very like, was day to day!  
Whene'er I looked, thy Image still was  
there;

It trembled, but it never passed away.

<sup>1</sup> See upon the subject of the three foregoing  
pieces "Matthew," &c., &c., pp. 486—493.

How perfect was the calm! it seemed no  
sleep;

No mood, which season takes away, or  
brings; 10

I could have fancied that the mighty  
Deep

Was even the gentlest of all gentle  
Things.

Ah! THEN, if mine had been the Painter's  
hand,

To express what then I saw; and add  
the gleam, 14

The light that never was, on sea or land,  
The consecration, and the Poet's dream;

I would have planted thee, thou hoary  
Pile

Amid a world how different from this!  
Beside a sea that could not cease to smile;  
On tranquil land, beneath a sky of bliss.

Thou shouldst have seemed a treasure-  
house divine 21

Of peaceful years; a chronicle of heaven;—  
Of all the sunbeams that did ever shine  
The very sweetest had to thee been given.

A Picture had it been of lasting ease, 25  
Elysian quiet, without toil or strife;  
No motion but the moving tide, a breeze,  
Or merely silent Nature's breathing life.

Such, in the fond illusion of my heart,  
Such Picture would I at that time have  
made: 30

And seen the soul of truth in every part,  
A steadfast peace that might not be be-  
trayed.

So once it would have been,—'tis so no  
more;

I have submitted to a new control:  
A power is gone, which nothing can re-  
store; 35

A deep distress hath humanised my Soul.

Not for a moment could I now behold  
A smiling sea, and be what I have been:  
The feeling of my loss will ne'er be old;  
This, which I know, I speak with mind  
serene. 40

Then, Beaumont, Friend! who would  
have been the Friend,  
If he had lived, of Him whom I deplore,  
This work of thine I blame not, but com-  
mend;  
This sea in anger, and that dismal shore.  
O 'tis a passionate Work!—yet wise and  
well, 45  
Well chosen is the spirit that is here;  
That Hulk which labours in the deadly  
swell,  
This rueful sky, this pageantry of fear!  
And this huge Castle, standing here  
sublime,  
I love to see the look with which it  
braves, 50  
Cased in the unfeeling armour of old  
time,  
The lightning, the fierce wind, and tramp-  
ling waves.  
Farewell, farewell the heart that lives  
alone,  
Housed in a dream, at distance from the  
Kind!  
Such happiness, wherever it be known,  
Is to be pitied; for 'tis surely blind. 56  
But welcome fortitude, and patient cheer,  
And frequent sights of what is to be  
borne!  
Such sights, or worse, as are before me  
here,—  
Not without hope we suffer and we  
mourn. 60

VII.

TO THE DAISY.

[Composed 1805.—Published 1815.]

SWEET Flower! belike one day to have  
A place upon thy Poet's grave,  
I welcome thee once more:  
But He, who was on land, at sea,  
My Brother, too, in loving thee, 5  
Although he loved more silently,  
Sleeps by his native shore.  
Ah! hopeful, hopeful was the day  
When to that Ship he bent his way,  
To govern and to guide: 10  
His wish was gained: a little time

Would bring him back in manhood's prime  
And free for life, these hills to climb,  
With all his wants supplied.

And full of hope day followed day 15  
While that stout Ship at anchor lay  
Beside the shores of Wight;  
The May had then made all things green;  
And, floating there, in pomp serene,  
That Ship was goodly to be seen, 20  
His pride and his delight!

Yet then, when called ashore, he sought  
The tender peace of rural thought:  
In more than happy mood  
To your abodes, bright daisy Flowers! 25  
He then would steal at leisure hours,  
And loved you glittering in your bowers,  
A starry multitude.

But hark the word!—the ship is gone;—  
Returns from her long course:—anon 30  
Sets sail:—in season due,  
Once more on English earth they stand:  
But, when a third time from the land  
They parted, sorrow was at hand  
For Him and for his crew. 35

Ill-fated Vessel!—ghastly shock!  
—At length delivered from the rock,  
The deep she hath regained;  
And through the stormy night they steer;  
Labouring for life, in hope and fear, 40  
To reach a safer shore—how near,  
Yet not to be attained!

"Silence!" the brave Commander cried;  
To that calm word a shriek replied,  
It was the last death-shriek. 45  
—A few (my soul oft sees that sight)  
Survive upon the tall mast's height;  
But one dear remnant of the night—  
For Him in vain I seek.

Six weeks beneath 'the moving sea 50  
He lay in slumber quietly;  
Unforced by wind or wave  
To quit the Ship for which he died,  
(All claims of duty satisfied;)  
And there they found him at her side; 55  
And bore him to the grave.

Vain service! yet not vainly done  
For this, if other end were none,

That He, who had been cast  
Upon a way of life unmeet 60  
For such a gentle Soul and sweet,  
Should find an undisturbed retreat  
Near what he loved, at last—

That neighbourhood of grove and field  
To Him a resting-place should yield, 65  
A meek man and a brave!  
The birds shall sing and ocean make  
A mournful murmur for *his* sake;  
And Thou, sweet Flower, shalt sleep and  
wake

Upon his senseless grave. 70

## VIII.

## ELEGIAC VERSES,

IN MEMORY OF MY BROTHER, JOHN  
WORDSWORTH,

Commander of the E. I. Company's ship, the  
Earl of Abergavenny, in which he perished  
by calamitous shipwreck, Feb. 6th, 1805. Com-  
posed near the Mountain track, that leads  
from Grasmere through Grisdale Hawes, where  
it descends towards Patterdale.

[Composed 1805.—Published: vol. of 1842.]

## I.

THE Sheep-boy whistled loud, and lo!  
That instant, startled by the shock,  
The Buzzard mounted from the rock  
Deliberate and slow:  
Lord of the air, he took his flight;  
Oh! could he on that woeful night 5  
Have lent his wing, my Brother dear,  
For one poor moment's space to Thee,  
And all who struggled with the Sea,  
When safety was so near. 10

## II.

Thus in the weakness of my heart  
I spoke (but let that pang be still)  
When rising from the rock at will,  
I saw the Bird depart.  
And let me calmly bless the Power 15  
That meets me in this unknown Flower,  
Affecting type of him I mourn!  
With calmness suffer and believe,  
And grieve, and know that I must grieve,  
Not cheerless, though forlorn. 20

## III.

Here did we stop; and here looked round  
While each into himself descends,  
For that last thought of parting Friends  
That is not to be found. 24  
Hidden was Grasmere Vale from sight,  
Our home and his, his heart's delight,  
His quiet heart's selected home.  
But time before him melts away,  
And he hath feeling of a day  
Of blessedness to come. 30

## IV.

Full soon in sorrow did I weep,  
Taught that the mutual hope was dust,  
In sorrow, but for higher trust,  
How miserably deep!  
All vanished in a single word, 35  
A breath, a sound, and scarcely heard.  
Sea—Ship—drowned—Shipwreck—so it  
came,  
The meek, the brave, the good, was gone;  
He who had been our living John  
Was nothing but a name. 40

## V.

That was indeed a parting! oh,  
Glad am I, glad that it is past;  
For there were some on whom it cast  
Unutterable woe.  
But they as well as I have gains;— 45  
From many a humble source, to pains  
Like these, there comes a mild release;  
Even here I feel it, even this Plant  
Is in its beauty ministrant  
To comfort and to peace. 50

## VI.

He would have loved thy modest grace,  
Meek Flower! To Him I would have  
said,  
"It grows upon its native bed  
Beside our Parting-place;  
There, cleaving to the ground, it lies 55  
With multitude of purple eyes,  
Spangling a cushion green like moss;  
But we will see it, joyful tide!  
Some day, to see it in its pride,  
The mountain will we cross." 60

## VII.

—Brother and friend, if verse of mine  
 Have power to make thy virtues known,  
 Here let a monumental Stone  
 Stand—sacred as a Shrine;  
 And to the few who pass this way, 65  
 Traveller or Shepherd, let it say,  
 Long as these mighty rocks endure,—  
 Oh do not Thou too fondly brood,  
 Although deserving of all good,  
 On any earthly hope, however pure!<sup>1</sup> 70

## IX.

## SONNET.

[Composed 1846.—Published 1850.]

WHY should we weep or mourn, Angelic  
 boy,  
 For such thou wert ere from our sight  
 removed,  
 Holy, and ever dutiful—beloved  
 From day to day with never-ceasing joy,  
 And hopes as dear as could the heart  
 employ 5  
 In aught to earth pertaining? Death has  
 proved  
 His might, nor less his mercy, as behoved—  
 Death conscious that he only could destroy  
 The bodily frame. That beauty is laid low  
 To moulder in a far-off field of Rome; 10  
 But Heaven is now, blest Child, thy  
 Spirit's home:  
 When such divine communion, which we  
 know,  
 Is felt, thy Roman burial-place will be  
 Surely a sweet remembrancer of Thee.

## X.

## LINES

Composed at Grassmere, during a walk one Evening, after a stormy day, the Author having just read in a Newspaper that the dissolution of Mr. Fox was hourly expected.

[Composed September (?), 1806.—Published 1807.]

LOUD is the Vale! the Voice is up  
 With which she speaks when storms are  
 gone,

<sup>1</sup> The plant alluded to is the Moss Campion (*Silene acaulis*, of Linnaeus). See Note, p. 925  
 See among the Poems on the "Naming of Places," No. vi.

A mighty unison of streams!  
 Of all her Voices, One!

Loud is the Vale;—this inland Depth 5  
 In peace is roaring like the Sea;  
 Yon star upon the mountain-top  
 Is listening quietly.

Sad was I, even to pain deprest,  
 Importunate and heavy load!<sup>2</sup> 10  
 The Comforter hath found me here,  
 Upon this lonely road;

And many thousands now are sad—  
 Wait the fulfilment of their fear;  
 For he must die who is their stay, 15  
 Their glory disappear.

A Power is passing from the earth  
 To breathless Nature's dark abyss;  
 But when the great and good depart  
 What is it more than this— 20

That Man, who is from God sent forth,  
 Doth yet again to God return?—  
 Such ebb and flow must ever be,  
 Then wherefore should we mourn?

## XI.

## INVOCATION TO THE EARTH.

FEBRUARY, 1816.

[Composed February, 1816.—Published 1816.]

## I.

"REST, rest, perturbed Earth!  
 O rest, thou doleful Mother of Man-  
 kind!"

A Spirit sang in tones more plaintive than  
 the wind:

"From regions where no evil thing has  
 birth

I come—thy stains to wash away, 5  
 Thy cherished fetters to unbind,  
 And open thy sad eyes upon a milder  
 day.

The Heavens are thronged with martyrs  
 that have risen  
 From out thy noisome prison;  
 The penal caverns groan 10

<sup>2</sup> Importuna e grave salma.  
 MICHAEL ANGELO.

With tens of thousands rent from off the tree  
 Of hopeful life,—by battle's whirlwind blown  
 Into the deserts of Eternity.  
 Unpitied havoc! Victims unlamented!  
 But not on high, where madness is re-  
 sented, 15  
 And murder causes some sad tears to flow,  
 Though, from the widely-sweeping blow,  
 The choirs of Angels spread, triumphant-  
 ly augmented.

## II.

"False Parent of Mankind!  
 Obdurate, proud, and blind, 20  
 I sprinkle thee with soft celestial dews,  
 Thy lost, maternal heart to re-infuse!  
 Scattering this far-fetched moisture from  
 my wings,  
 Upon the act a blessing I implore, 24  
 Of which the rivers in their secret springs,  
 The rivers stained so oft with human gore,  
 Are conscious;—may the like return no  
 more!  
 May Discord—for a Seraph's care  
 Shall be attended with a bolder prayer—  
 May she, who once disturbed the seats of  
 bliss 30  
 These mortal spheres above,  
 Be chained for ever to the black abyss!  
 And thou, O rescued Earth, by peace and  
 love,  
 And merciful desires, thy sanctity ap-  
 prove!" 34  
 The Spirit ended his mysterious rite,  
 And the pure vision closed in darkness  
 infinite.

## XII.

## LINES

WRITTEN ON A BLANK LEAF IN A COPY  
 OF THE AUTHOR'S POEM "THE EX-  
 CURSION," UPON HEARING OF THE  
 DEATH OF THE LATE VICAR OF  
 KENDAL.

[Composed November 13, 1814.—Published 1815.]  
 To public notice, with reluctance strong,  
 Did I deliver this unfinished Song;

Yet for one happy issue;—and I look  
 With self-congratulation on the Book  
 Which pious, learned, MURFITT saw and  
 read;—  
 Upon my thoughts his saintly Spirit fed;  
 He conned the new-born Lay with grate-  
 ful heart—  
 Foreboding not how soon he must de-  
 part;  
 Unweeting that to him the joy was given  
 Which good men take with them from  
 earth to heaven. 10

## XIII.

## ELEGIAC STANZAS.

(ADDRESSED TO SIR G. H. B. UPON THE  
 DEATH OF HIS SISTER-IN-LAW.)

[Composed probably Dec. 1824.—Published 1827.]

O FOR a dirge! But why complain?  
 Ask rather a triumphal strain  
 When FERMOR'S race is run;  
 A garland of immortal boughs  
 To twine around the Christian's brows, 5  
 Whose glorious work is done.

We pay a high and holy debt;  
 No tears of passionate regret  
 Shall stain this votive lay;  
 Ill-worthy, Beaumont! were the grief 10  
 That flings itself on wild relief  
 When Saints have passed away.

Sad doom, at Sorrow's shrine to kneel,  
 For ever covetous to feel,  
 And impotent to bear! 15  
 Such once was hers—to think and think  
 On severed love, and only sink  
 From anguish to despair!

But nature to its inmost part  
 Faith had refined; and to her heart 20  
 A peaceful cradle given:  
 Calm as the dew-drop's, free to rest  
 Within a breeze-fanned rose's breast  
 Till it exhales to Heaven.

Was ever Spirit that could bend 25  
 So graciously?—that could descend,  
 Another's need to suit,  
 So promptly from her lofty throne?—  
 In works of love, in these alone,  
 How restless, how minute! 30

Pale was her hue; yet mortal cheek  
Ne'er kindled with a livelier streak  
When aught had suffered wrong,—  
When aught that breathes had felt a  
wound;

Such look the Oppressor might confound,  
However proud and strong. 36

But hushed be every thought that springs  
From out the bitterness of things;

Her quiet is secure;  
No thorns can pierce her tender feet, 40  
Whose life was, like the violet, sweet,  
As climbing jasmine, pure—

As snowdrop on an infant's grave,  
Or lily heaving with the wave  
That feeds it and defends; 45  
As Vesper, ere the star hath kissed  
The mountain top, or breathed the mist  
That from the vale ascends.

Thou takest not away, O Death!  
Thou strikest—absence perisheth, 50  
Indifference is no more;  
The future brightens on our sight;  
For on the past hath fallen a light  
That tempts us to adore.

XIV.

ELEGIAC MUSINGS.

IN THE GROUNDS OF COLEORTON HALL,  
THE SEAT OF THE LATE SIR G. H.  
BEAUMONT, BART.

In these grounds stands the Parish Church,  
wherein is a mural monument bearing an  
Inscription which, in deference to the earnest  
request of the deceased, is confined to name,  
dates, and these words:—"Enter not into judg-  
ment with thy servant, O Lord!"

[Composed November, 1830.—Published 1835.]

With copious eulogy in prose or rhyme  
Graven on the tomb we struggle against  
Time,

Alas, how feebly! but our feelings rise  
And still we struggle when a good man  
dies.

Such offering BEAUMONT dreaded and for-  
bade, 5

A spirit meek in self-abasement clad.

Yet here at least, though few have num-  
bered days

That shunned so modestly the light of  
praise,

His graceful manners, and the temperate  
ray

Of that arch fancy which would round  
him play, 10

Brightening a converse never known to  
swerve

From courtesy and delicate reserve;  
That sense, the bland philosophy of life,  
Which checked discussion ere it warmed  
to strife;

Those rare accomplishments, and varied  
powers, 15

Might have their record among sylvan  
bowers.

Oh, fled for ever! vanished like a blast  
That shook the leaves in myriads as it  
passed;—

Gone from this world of earth, air, sea,  
and sky,

From all its spirit-moving imagery, 20  
Intensely studied with a painter's eye,

A poet's heart; and, for congenial view,  
Portrayed with happiest pencil, not un-  
true

To common recognitions while the line 24  
Flowed in a course of sympathy divine;—

Oh! severed, too abruptly, from delights  
That all the seasons shared with equal  
rights;—

Rapt in the grace of undismantled age,  
From soul-felt music, and the treasured  
page

Lit by that evening lamp which loved to  
shed 30

Its mellow lustre round thy honoured  
head;

While Friends beheld thee give with eye,  
voice, mien,

More than theatric force to Shakspeare's  
scene;—

If thou hast heard me—if thy Spirit know  
Aught of these bowers and whence their  
pleasures flow; 35

If things in our remembrance held so  
dear,

And thoughts and projects fondly che-  
rished here,

To thy exalted nature only seem  
Time's vanities, light fragments of earth's  
dream—

Rebuke us not!—The mandate is obeyed  
That said, "Let praise be mute where  
I am laid;" 41

The holier deprecation, given in trust  
To the cold marble, waits upon thy dust;  
Yet have we found how slowly genuine  
grief

From *silent* admiration wins relief. 45  
Too long abashed thy Name is like a rose  
That doth "within itself its sweetness  
close;"

A drooping daisy changed into a cup  
In which her bright-eyed beauty is shut up.  
Within these groves, where still are flit-  
ting by 50

Shades of the Past, oft noticed with a sigh,  
Shall stand a votive Tablet, haply free,  
When towers and temples fall, to speak  
of Thee!

If sculptured emblems of our mortal doom  
Recall not there the wisdom of the Tomb,  
Green ivy risen from out the cheerful earth  
Will fringe the lettered stone; and herbs  
spring forth,

Whose fragrance, by soft dews and rain  
unbound,

Shall penetrate the heart without a wound;  
While truth and love their purposes fulfil,  
Commemorating genius, talent, skill, 61  
That could not lie concealed where Thou  
wert known;

Thy virtues *He* must judge, and He alone,  
The God upon whose mercy they are  
thrown.

#### XV.

#### WRITTEN AFTER THE DEATH OF CHARLES LAMB.

[Composed November, 1835.—Published 1837]

To a good Man of most dear memory  
This Stone is sacred. Here he lies apart  
From the great city where he first drew  
breath,

Was reared and taught; and humbly  
earned his bread,

To the strict labours of the merchant's  
desk

By duty chained. Not seldom did those  
tasks

Tease, and the thought of time so spent  
depress,

His spirit, but the recompense was high;  
Firm Independence, Bounty's rightful  
sire;

Affections, warm as sunshine, free as air;  
And when the precious hours of leisure  
came, 11

Knowledge and wisdom, gained from con-  
verse sweet

With books, or while he ranged the  
crowded streets

With a keen eye, and overflowing heart:  
So genius triumphed over seeming wrong,  
And poured out truth in works by thought-  
ful love 16

Inspired—works potent over smiles and  
tears.

And as round mountain-tops the lightning  
plays,

Thus innocently sported, breaking forth  
As from a cloud of some grave sympathy,  
Humour and wild instinctive wit, and all  
The vivid flashes of his spoken words. 22  
From the most gentle creature nursed in  
fields

Had been derived the name he bore—  
a name,

Wherever Christian altars have been  
raised, 25

Hallowed to meekness and to innocence;  
And if in him meekness at times gave way,  
Provoked out of herself by troubles  
strange,

Many and strange, that hung about his  
life;

Still, at the centre of his being, lodged 30  
A soul by resignation sanctified:

And if too often, self-reproached, he felt  
That innocence belongs not to our kind,  
A power that never ceased to abide in him,  
Charity, 'mid the multitude of sins 35  
That she can cover, left not his exposed  
To an unforgetting judgment from just  
Heaven.

O, he was good, if e'er a good Man lived!

From a reflecting mind and sorrowing  
heart

Those simple lines flowed with an earnest  
wish, 40  
Though but a doubting hope, that they  
might serve  
Fitly to guard the precious dust of him  
Whose virtues called them forth. That  
aim is missed ;  
For much that truth most urgently re-  
quired  
Had from a faltering pen been asked in  
vain : 45  
Yet, haply, on the printed page received,  
The imperfect record, there, may stand  
unblamed  
As long as verse of mine shall breathe the  
air  
Of memory, or see the light of love.

Thou wert a scorner of the fields, my  
Friend, 50  
But more in show than truth ; and from  
the fields,  
And from the mountains, to thy rural  
grave  
Transported, my soothed spirit hovers o'er  
Its green untrodden turf, and blowing  
flowers ;  
And taking up a voice shall speak (tho'  
still 55  
Awed by the theme's peculiar sanctity  
Which words less free presumed not even  
to touch)  
Of that fraternal love, whose heaven-lit  
lamp  
From infancy, through manhood, to the  
last  
Of threescore years, and to thy latest  
hour, 60  
Burnt on with ever-strengthening light,  
enshrined  
Within thy bosom.

"Wonderful" hath been  
The love established between man and  
man,  
"Passing the love of women ;" and be-  
tween  
Man and his help-mate in fast wedlock  
joined 65  
Through God, is raised a spirit and soul  
of love  
Without whose blissful influence Paradise

Had been no Paradise ; and earth were  
now  
A waste where creatures bearing human  
form,  
Direst of savage beasts, would roam in  
fear, 70  
Joyless and comfortless. Our days glide  
on ;  
And let him grieve who cannot choose  
but grieve  
That he hath been an Elm without his Vine,  
And her bright dower of clustering chari-  
ties,  
That, round his trunk and branches,  
might have clung 75  
Enriching and adorning. Unto thee,  
Not so enriched, not so adorned, to thee  
Was given (say rather thou of later birth  
Wert given to her) a Sister—'tis a word  
Timidly uttered, for she *lives*, the meek,  
The self-restraining, and the ever-kind ; 81  
In whom thy reason and intelligent heart  
Found—for all interests, hopes, and tender  
cares,  
All softening, humanising, hallowing  
powers,  
Whether withheld, or for her sake un-  
sought— 85  
More than sufficient recompense !  
Her love  
(What weakness prompts the voice to tell  
it here?)  
Was as the love of mothers ; and when  
years,  
Lifting the boy to man's estate, had called  
The long-protected to assume the part 90  
Of a protector, the first filial tie  
Was undissolved ; and, in or out of sight,  
Remained imperishably interwoven  
With life itself. Thus, 'mid a shifting  
world,  
Did they together testify of time 95  
And season's difference—a double tree  
With two collateral stems sprung from  
one root ;  
Such were they—such thro' life they *might*  
have been  
In union, in partition only such ;  
Otherwise wrought the will of the Most  
High ; 100  
Yet, thro' all visitations and all trials,

Still they were faithful; like two vessels  
launched

From the same beach one ocean to explore  
With mutual help, and sailing—to their  
league

True, as inexorable winds, or bars 105  
Floating or fixed of polar ice, allow.

But turn we rather, let my spirit turn  
With thine, O silent and invisible Friend!  
To those dear intervals, nor rare nor brief,  
When reunited, and by choice withdrawn  
From miscellaneous converse, ye were  
taught 111

That the remembrance of foregone distress,  
And the worse fear of future ill (which oft  
Doth hang around it, as a sickly child  
Upon its mother) may be both alike 115  
Disarmed of power to unsettle present  
good

So prized, and things inward and outward  
held

In such an even balance, that the heart  
Acknowledges God's grace, his mercy  
feels,  
And in its depth of gratitude is still. 120

O gift divine of quiet sequestration!  
The hermit, exercised in prayer and  
praise,

And feeding daily on the hope of heaven,  
Is happy in his vow, and fondly cleaves  
To life-long singleness; but happier far  
Was to your souls, and, to the thoughts  
of others, 126

A thousand times more beautiful ap-  
peared,

Your dual loneliness. The sacred tie  
Is broken; yet why grieve? for Time but  
holds

His moiety in trust, till Joy shall lead 130  
To the blest world where parting is un-  
known.

#### XVI.

#### EXTEMPORE EFFUSION UPON THE DEATH OF JAMES HOGG.

[Composed November, 1835.—Published Decem-  
ber 12, 1835 (*The Athenæum*); ed. 1837.]

WHEN first, descending from the moor-  
lands,

I saw the Stream of Yarrow glide

Along a bare and open valley,  
The Ettrick Shepherd was my guide.

When last along its banks I wandered, 5  
Through groves that had begun to shed  
Their golden leaves upon the pathways,  
My steps the Border-minstrel led.

The mighty Minstrel breathes no longer,  
'Mid mouldering ruins low he lies; 10  
And death upon the braes of Yarrow,  
Has closed the Shepherd-poet's eyes:

Nor has the rolling year twice measured,  
From sign to sign, its steadfast course,  
Since every mortal power of Coleridge 15  
Was frozen at its marvellous source;

The rapt One, of the godlike forehead,  
The heaven-eyed creature sleeps in earth:  
And Lamb, the frolic and the gentle,  
Has vanished from his lonely hearth. 20

Like clouds that rake the mountain-sum-  
mits,

Or waves that own no curbing hand,  
How fast has brother followed brother,  
From sunshine to the sunless land!

Yet I, whose lids from infant slumber 25  
Were earlier raised, remain to hear  
A timid voice, that asks in whispers,  
"Who next will drop and disappear?"

Our haughty life is crowned with dark-  
ness.

Like London with its own black wreath,  
On which with thee, O Crabbe! forth-  
looking, 31

I gazed from Hampstead's breezy heath.

As if but yesterday departed,  
Thou too art gone before; but why,  
O'er ripe fruit, seasonably gathered, 35  
Should frail survivors heave a sigh?

Mourn rather for that holy Spirit,  
Sweet as the spring, as ocean deep;  
For Her who, ere her summer faded,  
Has sunk into a breathless sleep. 40

No more of old romantic sorrows,  
For slaughtered Youth or love-lorn Maid!  
With sharper grief is Yarrow smitten,  
And Ettrick mourns with her their Poet  
dead<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 926.

## XVII.

## INSCRIPTION

FOR A MONUMENT IN CROSTHWAITE  
CHURCH, IN THE VALE OF KESWICK.

[Composed 1843.—Published 1845.]

YE vales and hills whose beauty hither  
drew

The poet's steps, and fixed him here, on you  
His eyes have closed! And ye, lov'd  
books, no more

Shall Southey feed upon your precious lore,  
To works that ne'er shall forfeit their  
renown, 5

Adding immortal labours of his own—  
Whether he traced historic truth, with zeal  
For the State's guidance, or the Church's  
weal,

Or Fancy, disciplined by studious art,  
Inform'd his pen, or wisdom of the  
heart,

Or judgments sanctioned in the Patriot's  
mind 11

By reverence for the rights of all man-  
kind.

Wide were his aims, yet in no human  
breast

Could private feelings meet for holier  
rest.

His joys, his griefs, have vanished like  
a cloud 15

From Skiddaw's top; but he to heaven  
was vowed

Through his industrious life, and Christian  
faith

Calmed in his soul the fear of change and  
death.

## ODE.

INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF  
EARLY CHILDHOOD.

The Child is father of the Man;  
And I could wish my days to be  
Bound each to each by natural piety.

[Composed 1803 (? 1802)—1806.—Published 1807.]

## I.

THERE was a time when meadow, grove,  
and stream,

The earth, and every common sight,  
To me did seem

Apparelled in celestial light,  
The glory and the freshness of a dream.

It is not now as it hath been of yore;—

Turn wheresoe'er I may,

By night or day,

The things which I have seen I now can  
see no more.

## II.

The Rainbow comes and goes, 10  
And lovely is the Rose,

The Moon doth with delight

Look round her when the heavens are  
bare,

Waters on a starry night

Are beautiful and fair; 15

The sunshine is a glorious birth;

But yet I know, where'er I go,

That there hath past away a glory from  
the earth.

## III.

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous  
 song,  
 And while the young lambs bound 20  
 As to the tabor's sound,  
 To me alone there came a thought of  
 grief:  
 A timely utterance gave that thought  
 relief,  
 And I again am strong:  
 The cataracts blow their trumpets from  
 the steep; 25  
 No more shall grief of mine the season  
 wrong;  
 I hear the Echoes through the mountains  
 throng,  
 The Winds come to me from the fields of  
 sleep,  
 And all the earth is gay;  
 Land and sea 30  
 Give themselves up to jollity,  
 And with the heart of May  
 Doth every Beast keep holiday;—  
 Thou Child of Joy,  
 Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts,  
 thou happy Shepherd-boy! 35

## IV.

Ye blessed Creatures, I have heard the  
 call  
 Ye to each other make; I see  
 The heavens laugh with you in your  
 jubilee;  
 My heart is at your festival,  
 My head hath its coronal, 40  
 The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it  
 all.  
 Oh evil day! if I were sullen  
 While Earth herself is adorning,  
 This sweet May-morning,  
 And the Children are culling 45  
 On every side,  
 In a thousand valleys far and wide,  
 Fresh flowers; while the sun shines  
 warm,  
 And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's  
 arm:—  
 I hear, I hear, with joy I hear! 50  
 —But there's a Tree, of many, one,

A single Field which I have looked upon,  
 Both of them speak of something that is  
 gone:

The Pansy at my feet  
 Doth the same tale repeat: 55  
 Whither is fled the visionary gleam?  
 Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

## V.

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:  
 The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,  
 Hath had elsewhere its setting, 60  
 And cometh from afar:  
 Not in entire forgetfulness,  
 And not in utter nakedness,  
 But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
 From God, who is our home: 65  
 Heaven lies about us in our infancy!  
 Shades of the prison-house begin to close  
 Upon the growing Boy,  
 But He beholds the light, and whence it  
 flows,  
 He sees it in his joy; 70  
 The Youth, who daily farthest from the east  
 Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,  
 And by the vision splendid  
 Is on his way attended;  
 At length the Man perceives it die away,  
 And fade into the light of common day. 76

## VI.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her  
 own;  
 Yearnings she hath in her own natural  
 kind,  
 And, even with something of a Mother's  
 mind, 80  
 And no unworthy aim,  
 The homely Nurse doth all she can  
 To make her Foster-child; her Inmate  
 Man,  
 Forget the glories he hath known,  
 And that imperial palace whence he came.

## VII.

Behold the Child among his new-born  
 blisses, 85  
 A six years' Darling of a pigmy size!  
 See, where 'mid work of his own hand he  
 lies,  
 Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,

With light upon him from his father's  
eyes!  
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,  
Some fragment from his dream of human  
life, 91  
Shaped by himself with newly-learned art;  
A wedding or a festival,  
A mourning or a funeral;  
And this hath now his heart, 95  
And unto this he frames his song:  
Then will he fit his tongue  
To dialogues of business, love, or strife;  
But it will not be long  
Ere this be thrown aside, 100  
And with new joy and pride  
The little Actor cons another part;  
Filling from time to time his "humorous  
stage"  
With all the Persons, down to palsied  
Age,  
That Life brings with her in her equipage;  
As if his whole vocation 106  
Were endless imitation.

## VIII.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie  
Thy Soul's immensity;  
Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost  
keep 110  
Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,  
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal  
deep,  
Haunted for ever by the eternal mind,—  
Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!  
On whom those truths do rest, 115  
Which we are toiling all our lives to find,  
In darkness lost, the darkness of the  
grave;  
Thou, over whom thy Immortality  
Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a Slave,  
A Presence which is not to be put by; 120  
[To whom the grave  
Is but a lonely bed without the sense or  
sight  
Of day or the warm light,  
A place of thought where we in waiting  
lie;']

<sup>1</sup> Found in edd. 1807 and 1815; omitted from ed. 1820 and all subsequent issues in consequence of Coleridge's adverse criticism. See *Biographia Literaria*, chap. xxii.—Ed.

Thou little Child, yet glorious in the  
might 125  
Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's  
height,  
Why with such earnest pains dost thou  
provoke  
The years to bring the inevitable yoke,  
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at  
strife?  
Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly  
freight, 130  
And custom lie upon thee with a weight,  
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

## IX.

O joy! that in our embers  
Is something that doth live,  
That nature yet remembers 135  
What was so fugitive!  
The thought of our past years in me doth  
breed  
Perpetual benediction: not indeed  
For that which is most worthy to be  
blest;  
Delight and liberty, the simple creed 140  
Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,  
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in  
his breast:—  
Not for these I raise  
The song of thanks and praise;  
But for those obstinate questionings  
Of sense and outward things, 146  
Fallings from us, vanishings;  
Blank misgivings of a Creature  
Moving about in worlds not realised,  
High instincts before which our mortal  
Nature 150  
Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised:  
But for those first affections,  
Those shadowy recollections,  
Which, be they what they may, 154  
Are yet the fountain-light of all our day,  
Are yet a master-light of all our seeing;  
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to  
make  
Our noisy years seem moments in the  
being  
Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,  
To perish never: 160  
Which neither listlessness, nor mad en-  
deavour,

Nor Man nor Boy,  
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,  
Can utterly abolish or destroy !

Hence in a season of calm weather  
Though inland far we be, 166  
Our Souls have sight of that immortal  
sea

Which brought us hither,  
Can in a moment travel thither,  
And see the Children sport upon the  
shore, 170  
And hear the mighty waters rolling ever-  
more.

## X.

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous  
song !

And let the young Lambs bound  
As to the tabor's sound !

We in thought will join your throng, 175  
Ye that pipe and ye that play,  
Ye that through your hearts to-  
day

Feel the gladness of the May !  
What though the radiance which was  
once so bright

Be now for ever taken from my sight, 180  
Though nothing can bring back the  
hour

Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the  
flower ;

We will grieve not, rather find  
Strength in what remains behind ;  
In the primal sympathy 185  
Which having been must ever be ;

In the soothing thoughts that spring  
Out of human suffering ;  
In the faith that looks through  
death,  
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

## XI.

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills,  
and Groves, 191  
Forebode not any severing of our loves !  
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your  
might ;

I only have relinquished one delight  
To live beneath your more habitual sway.  
I love the Brooks which down their  
channels fret, 196  
Even more than when I tripped lightly  
as they ;

The innocent brightness of a new-born Day  
Is lovely yet ;

The Clouds that gather round the setting  
sun 200

Do take a sober colouring from an eye  
That hath kept watch o'er man's mor-  
tality ;

Another race hath been, and other palms  
are won.

Thanks to the human heart by which we  
live,

Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and  
fears, 205

To me the meanest flower that blows can  
give

Thoughts that do often lie too deep for  
tears.

# APPENDIX: POEMS OF 1793<sup>1</sup>.

## An Evening Walk.

REPRINTED FROM THE QUARTO OF 1793.

AN EVENING WALK. AN EPISTLE; IN VERSE. ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG LADY, FROM THE LAKES OF THE NORTH OF ENGLAND. BY W. WORDSWORTH, B.A., OF ST. JOHN'S, CAMBRIDGE. LONDON: PRINTED FOR J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD. 1793.

### ARGUMENT.

General Sketch of the Lakes.—Author's Regret of his Youth passed amongst them.—Short description of Noon.—Cascade Scene.—Noontide Retreat.—Precipice and Sloping Lights.—Face of Nature as the Sun declines.—Mountain Farm, and the Cock.—Slate Quarry.—Sunset.—Superstition of the Country, connected with that Moment.—Swans.—Female Beggar.—Twilight Objects.—Twilight Sounds.—Western Lights.—Spirits.—Night.—Moonlight.—Hope.—Night Sounds.—Conclusion.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| FAR from my dearest friend, 'tis mine to rove       | Leads to her bridge, rude church, and cottag'd grounds,  |
| Thro' bare grey dell, high wood, and pastoral cove; | Her rocky sheepwalks, and her woodland bounds;           |
| His wizard course where hoary Derwent takes         | Where, bosom'd deep, the shy Winander <sup>2</sup> peeps |
| Thro' craggs, and forest glooms, and opening lakes, | 'Mid clust'ring isles, and holly-sprinkl'd steep;        |
| Staying his silent waves, to hear the roar          | Where twilight glens endear my Esthwaite's shore,        |
| That stuns the tremulous cliffs of high Lodore:     | And memory of departed pleasures, more.                  |
| Where silver rocks the savage prospect cheer        | Fair scenes! with other eyes, than once, I gaze,         |
| Of giant yews that frown on Rydale's mere;          | The ever-varying charm your round displays,              |
| Where peace to Grasmere's lonely island leads,      | Than when, erewhile, I taught, "a happy child,"          |
| To willow hedgerows, and to emerald meads;          | The echoes of your rocks my carols wild:                 |
|   | 10 20  |

<sup>1</sup> The *Errata* of these Poems are here rectified in the text.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> These lines are only applicable to the middle part of that lake.

Then did no ebb of cheerfulness demand  
Sad tides of joy from Melancholy's hand;  
In youth's wild eye the livelong day was  
bright,

The sun at morning, and the stars of  
night,

Alike, when first the vales the bittern  
fills. 25

Or the first woodcocks<sup>1</sup> roam'd the moon-  
light hills.

Return Delights! with whom my road  
begun,

When Life rear'd laughing up her morn-  
ing sun;

When Transport kiss'd away my april tear,  
"Rocking as in a dream the tedious  
year;" 30

When link'd with thoughtless Mirth I  
cours'd the plain,

And hope itself was all I knew of pain.  
For then, ev'n then, the little heart would  
beat

At times, while young Content forsook  
her seat,

And wild Impatience, panting upward,  
show'd 35

Where tipp'd with gold the mountain-  
summits glow'd.

Alas! the idle tale of man is found  
Depicted in the dial's moral round;

With Hope Reflexion blends her social  
rays

To gild the total tablet of his days; 40  
Yet still, the sport of some malignant

Pow'r,  
He knows but from its shade the present  
hour.

While, Memory at my side, I wander here,  
Starts at the simplest sight th' unbidden  
tear, 44

A form discover'd at the well-known seat,  
A spot, that angles at the riv'let's feet,

The ray the cot of morning trav'ling nigh,  
And sail that glides the well-known alders  
by.

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning of winter, these mountains, in the moonlight nights, are covered with immense quantities of woodcocks; which, in the dark nights, retire into the woods.

But why, ungrateful, dwell on idle pain?  
To shew her yet some joys to me remain,  
Say, will my friend, with soft affection's ear,  
The history of a poet's ev'ning hear?

When, in the south, the wan noon brood-  
ing still,

Breath'd a pale steam around the glaring  
hill,

And shades of deep embattl'd clouds were  
seen 55

Spotting the northern cliffs with lights  
between;

Gazing the tempting shades to them  
deny'd,

When stood the shorten'd herds amid the  
tide,

Where, from the barren wall's unshelter'd  
end,

Long rails into the shallow lake extend;  
When schoolboys stretch'd their length  
upon the green 61

And round the humming elm, a glimmer-  
ing scene!

In the brown park, in flocks, the troubl'd  
deer

Shook the still twinkling tail and glanc-  
ing ear;

When horses in the wall-girt intake<sup>2</sup>  
stood, 65

Unshaded, eying far below, the flood,  
Crouded behind the swain, in mute dis-  
tress,

With forward neck the closing gate to  
press;

And long, with wistful gaze, his walk  
survey'd

Till dipp'd his pathway in the river  
shade; 70

—Then Quiet led me up the huddling rill,  
Bright'ning with water-breaks the som-  
brous gill<sup>3</sup>;

To where, while thick above the branches  
close,

In dark-brown bason its wild waves re-  
pose,

<sup>2</sup> The word *intake* is local, and signifies a mountain-inclosure.

<sup>3</sup> Gill is also, I believe, a term confined to this country. Glen, gill, and dingle, have the same meaning.

Inverted shrubs, and moss of darkest  
green, 75

Cling from the rocks, with pale wood-  
weeds between;

Save that, atop, the subtle sunbeams  
shine,

On wither'd briars that o'er the craggs  
recline;

Sole light admitted here, a small cascade,  
Illumes with sparkling foam the twilight  
shade. 80

Beyond, along the vistic of the brook,  
Where antique roots its bustling path  
o'erlook,

The eye reposes on a secret bridge<sup>1</sup>  
Half grey, half shagg'd with ivy to its  
ridge.

—Sweet rill, farewell! To-morrow's noon  
again, 85

Shall hide me wooing long thy wildwood  
strain;

But now the sun has gain'd his western  
road,

And eve's mild hour invites my steps  
abroad.

While, near the midway cliff, the silver'd  
kite

In many a whistling circle wheels her  
flight; 90

Slant wat'ry lights, from parting clouds  
a-pace,

Travel along the precipice's base;  
Chearing its naked waste of scatter'd  
stone

By lichens grey, and scanty moss o'er-  
grown,

Where scarce the foxglove peeps, and  
thistle's beard, 95

And desert stone-chat, all day long, is  
heard.

How pleasant, as the yellowing sun de-  
clines,

And with long rays and shades the land-  
scape shines;

How pleasant, as the yellowing sun de-  
clines,

And with long rays and shades the land-  
scape shines;

<sup>1</sup> The reader, who has made the tour of this  
country, will recognize in this description the  
features which characterize the lower waterfall  
in the gardens of Rydale.

To mark the birches' stems all golden  
light,

That lit the dark slant woods with silvery  
white! 100

The willows weeping trees, that twink-  
ling hoar,

Glanc'd oft upturn'd along the breezy  
shore,

Low bending o'er the colour'd water, fold  
Their moveless boughs and leaves like  
threads of gold;

The skiffs with naked masts at anchor  
laid, 105

Before the boat-house peeping thro' the  
shade;

Th' unwearied glance of woodman's echo'd  
stroke;

And curling from the trees the cottage  
smoke.

Their pannier'd train a groupe of potters  
goad,

Winding from side to side up the steep  
road; 110

The peasant from yon cliff of fearful edge  
Shot, down the headlong pathway darts  
his sledge;

Bright beams the lonely mountain horse  
illumine,

Feeding 'mid purple heath, "green rings,"  
and broom;

While the sharp slope the slacken'd team  
confounds, 115

Downward<sup>3</sup> the pond'rous timber-wain  
resounds;

Beside their sheltering cross<sup>4</sup> of wall, the  
flock

Feeds on in light, nor thinks of winter's  
shock;

In foamy breaks the rill, with merry  
song,

Dash'd down the rough rock, lightly leaps  
along; 120

Dash'd down the rough rock, lightly leaps  
along;

Dash'd down the rough rock, lightly leaps  
along;

<sup>2</sup> "Vivid rings of green." GREENWOOD's Poem  
on Shooting.

<sup>3</sup> "Down the rough slope the pond'rous waggon  
rings." BEATTIE.

<sup>4</sup> These rude structures, to protect the flocks,  
are frequent in this country: the traveller may  
recollect one in Withburne, another upon Whin-  
latter.

From lonesome chapel at the mountain's  
 feet,  
 Three humble bells their rustic chime  
 repeat;  
 Sounds from the water-side the hammer'd  
 boat;  
 And blasted quarry thunders heard re-  
 mote.  
 Ev'n here, amid the sweep of endless  
 woods, 125  
 Blue pomp of lakes, high cliffs, and fall-  
 ing floods,  
 Not undelightful are the simplest charms  
 Found by the verdant door of mountain  
 farms.  
 Sweetly<sup>1</sup> ferocious round his native walks,  
 Gaz'd by his sister-wives, the monarch  
 stalks; 130  
 Spur clad his nervous feet, and firm his  
 tread,  
 A crest of purple tops his warrior head.  
 Bright sparks his black and haggard eye-  
 ball hurls  
 Afar, his tail he closes and unfurls;  
 Whose state, like pine-trees, waving to  
 and fro, 135  
 Droops, and o'er canopies his regal brow,  
 On tiptoe rear'd he blows his clarion  
 throat,  
 Threaten'd by faintly answering farms  
 remote.  
 Bright'ning the cliffs between where  
 sombrous pine,  
 And yew-trees o'er the silver rocks re-  
 cline, 140  
 I love to mark the quarry's moving trains,  
 Dwarf pannier'd steeds, and men, and  
 numerous wains:  
 How busy the enormous hive within,  
 While Echo dallies with the various din!  
 Some, hardly heard their chissel's clink-  
 ing sound, 145  
 Toil, small as pigmies, in the gulph pro-  
 found;

Some, dim between th' aereal cliffs de-  
 scri'd,  
 O'erwalk the viewless plank from side to  
 side;  
 These by the pale-blue rocks that cease-  
 less ring  
 Glad from their airy baskets hang and  
 sing. 150  
 Hung o'er a cloud, above the steep that  
 rears  
 It's edge all flame, the broad'ning sun  
 appears;  
 A long blue bar it's ægis orb divides,  
 And breaks the spreading of it's golden  
 tides;  
 And now it touches on the purple steep  
 That flings his shadow on the pictur'd  
 deep. 155  
 Cross the calm lakes blue shades the cliffs  
 aspire,  
 With tow'rs and woods a "prospect all on  
 fire;"  
 The coves and secret hollows thro' a ray  
 Of fainter gold a purple gleam betray;  
 The gilded turf arrays in richer green 161  
 Each speck of lawn the broken rocks  
 between;  
 Deep yellow beams the scatter'd boles  
 illumine,  
 Far in the level forest's central gloom;  
 Waving his hat, the shepherd in the vale  
 Directs his winding dog the cliffs to scale,  
 That, barking busy 'mid the glittering rocks,  
 Hunts, where he points, the intercepted  
 flocks;  
 Where oaks o'erhang the road the radiance  
 shoots  
 On tawny earth, wild weeds, and twisted  
 roots; 170  
 The Druid<sup>2</sup> stones their lighted fane un-  
 fold,  
 And all the babbling brooks are liquid  
 gold;

<sup>1</sup> "Dolcemente feroce."—TASSO.

In this description of the cock, I remembered a spirited one of the same animal in the *P'Agriculture, ou Les Georgiques Françaises* of M. Rossmet.

<sup>2</sup> Not far from Broughton is a Druid monument, of which I do not recollect that any tour descriptive of this country makes mention. Perhaps this poem may fall into the hands of some curious traveller, who may thank me for informing him, that up the Duddon, the river which forms the estuary at Broughton, may be found some of the most romantic scenery of these mountains.

Sunk<sup>1</sup> to a curve the day-star lessens  
still,  
Gives one bright glance, and sinks behind  
the hill.

In these lone vales, if aught of faith may  
claim,  
Thin silver hairs, and ancient hamlet<sup>175</sup>  
fame;  
When up the hills, as now, retreats the  
light,  
Strange apparitions mock the village  
sight.

A desperate form appears, that spurs his  
steed,  
Along the midway cliffs with violent  
speed;  
Unhurt pursues his lengthen'd flight,<sup>180</sup>  
while all  
Attend, at every stretch, his headlong  
fall.

Anon, in order mounts a gorgeous show  
Of horsemen shadows winding to and  
fro;

And now the van is gilt with evening's  
beam,  
The rear thro' iron brown betrays a sullen<sup>185</sup>  
gleam;

Lost<sup>2</sup> gradual o'er the heights in pomp  
they go,  
While silent stands th' admiring vale  
below;

Till, but the lonely beacon all is fled,  
That tips with eve's last gleam his spiry  
head.<sup>190</sup>

Now while the solemn evening Shadows  
sail,

On red slow-waving pinions down the  
vale,

And, fronting the bright west in stronger  
lines,

The oak its dark'ning boughs and foliage  
twines,

I love beside the flowing lake to stray,  
Where winds the road along the secret  
bay;<sup>196</sup>

By rills that tumble down the woody  
steeps,  
And run in transport to the dimpling  
deeps;

Along the "wild meand'ring" shore to  
view,

Obsequious Grace the winding swan pur-  
sue.<sup>200</sup>

He swells his lifted chest, and backward  
flings

His bridling neck between his tow'ring  
wings;

Stately, and burning in his pride, di-  
vides

And glorying looks around, the silent  
tides:

On as he floats, the silver'd waters glow,  
Proud of the varying arch and moveless  
form of snow.<sup>206</sup>

While tender Cares and mild domestic  
Loves,

With furtive watch pursue her as she  
moves;

The female with a meeker charm suc-  
ceeds,

And her brown little ones around her  
leads,<sup>210</sup>

Nibbling the water lilies as they pass,  
Or playing wanton with the floating  
grass:

She in a mother's care, her beauty's  
pride

Forgets, unweary'd watching every side,  
She calls them near, and with affection  
sweet<sup>215</sup>

Alternately relieves their weary feet;  
Alternately<sup>3</sup> they mount her back, and  
rest

Close by her mantling wings' embraces  
prest.

Long may ye roam these hermit waves  
that sleep,

In birch besprinkl'd cliffs embosom'd  
deep;<sup>220</sup>

These fairy holms untrodden, still, and  
green,

Whose shades protect the hidden wave  
serene;

<sup>1</sup> From Thomson: see Scott's Critical Essays.

<sup>2</sup> See a description of an appearance of this kind in Clark's "Survey of the Lakes," accompanied with vouchers of its veracity that may amuse the reader.

<sup>3</sup> This is a fact of which I have been an eye-witness.

Whence fragrance scents the water's  
 desert gale,  
 The violet, and the lily<sup>1</sup> of the vale;  
 Where, tho' her far-off twilight ditty  
 steal, 225  
 They not the trip of harmless milkmaid  
 feel.

Yon tuft conceals your home, your cottage  
 bow'r,

Fresh water rushes strew the verdant  
 floor;

Long grass and willows form the woven  
 wall,

And swings above the roof the poplar  
 tall. 230

Thence issuing oft, unwieldily as ye  
 stalk,

Ye crush with broad black feet your  
 flow'ry walk;

Safe from your door ye hear at breezy  
 morn,

The hound, the horse's tread, and mellow  
 horn;

At peace inverted your lithe necks ye  
 lave, 235

With the green bottom strewing o'er the  
 wave;

No ruder sound your desert haunts in-  
 vades,

Than waters dashing wild, or rocking  
 shades.

Ye ne'er, like hapless human wanderers,  
 throw

Your young on winter's winding sheet of  
 snow. 240

Fair swan! by all a mother's joys caress'd,  
 Haply some wretch has ey'd, and call'd  
 thee bless'd;

Who faint, and beat by summer's breath-  
 less ray,

Hath dragg'd her babes along this weary  
 way;

While arrowy fire extorting feverish  
 groans, 245

Shot stinging through her stark o'er-  
 labour'd bones.

—With backward gaze, lock'd joints, and  
 step of pain,

Her seat scarce left, she strives, alas! in  
 vain,

To teach their limbs along the burning  
 road

A few short steps to totter with their  
 load, 250

Shakes her numb arm that slumbers with  
 its weight,

And eyes through tears the mountain's  
 shadeless height;

And bids her soldier come her woes to  
 share,

Asleep on Bunker's charnel hill<sup>2</sup> afar;  
 For hope's deserted well why wistful  
 look? 255

Chok'd is the pathway, and the pitcher  
 broke.

I see her now, deny'd to lay her head,  
 On cold blue nights, in hut or straw-built  
 shed;

Turn to a silent smile their sleepy cry,  
 By pointing to a shooting star on high:

I hear, while in the forest depth he sees,  
 The Moon's fix'd gaze between the open-  
 ing trees,

In broken sounds her elder grief demand,  
 And skyward lift, like one that prays, his  
 hand,

If, in that country, where he dwells  
 afar, 265

His father views that good, that kindly  
 star;

—Ah me! all light is mute amid the  
 gloom,

The interlunar cavern of the tomb.

—When low-hung clouds each star of  
 summer hide,

And fireless are the valleys far and  
 wide, 270

Where the brook brawls along the painful  
 road,

Dark with bat haunted ashes stretching  
 broad,

The distant clock forgot, and chilling dew,  
 Pleas'd thro' the dusk their breaking  
 smiles to view,

<sup>1</sup> The lily of the valley is found in great abundance in the smaller islands of Winandermere.

<sup>2</sup> Substituted in *Errata* for the words of the text:—"Minden's charnel plain."—Ed.

Of't has she taught them on her lap to play  
 Delighted, with the glow-worm's harm-  
 less ray 276  
 Toss'd light from hand to hand; while  
 on the ground  
 Small circles of green radiance gleam  
 around.

Oh! when the bitter showers her path  
 assail,

And roars between the hills the torrent  
 gale, 280

—No more her breath can thaw their  
 fingers cold,

Their frozen arms her neck no more can  
 fold;

Scarce heard, their chattering lips her  
 shoulder chill,

And her cold back their colder bosoms  
 thrill;

All blind she wilders o'er the lightless  
 heath, 285

Led by Fear's cold wet hand, and dogg'd  
 by Death;

Death, as she turns her neck the kiss to  
 seek,

Breaks off the dreadful kiss with angry  
 shriek.

Snatch'd from her shoulder with despair-  
 ing moan,

She clasps them at that dim-seen roofless  
 stone.— 290

“Now ruthless Tempest launch thy dead-  
 liest dart!

Fall fires—but let us perish heart to  
 heart.”

Weak roof a cowering form two babes to  
 shield,

And faint the fire a dying heart can yield;  
 Press the sad kiss, fond mother! vainly  
 fears 295

Thy flooded cheek to wet them with its  
 tears;

Soon shall the Light'ning hold before thy  
 head

His torch, and shew them slumbering in  
 their bed,

No tears can chill them, and no bosom  
 warms,

Thy breast their death-bed, coffin'd in  
 thine arms. 300

Sweet are the sounds that mingle from  
 afar,

Heard by calm lakes, as peeps the folding  
 star,

Where the duck dabbles 'mid the rustling  
 sedge,

And feeding pike starts from the water's  
 edge,

Or the swan stirs the reeds, his neck and  
 bill 305

Wetting, that drip upon the water still;  
 And heron, as resounds the trodden shore,

Shoots upward, darting his long neck  
 before.

While, by the scene compos'd, the breast  
 subsides,

Nought wakens or disturbs it's tranquil  
 tides; 310

Nought but the char that for the may-fly  
 leaps,

And breaks the mirror of the circling  
 deeps;

Or clock, that blind against the wanderer  
 born,

Drops at his feet, and stills his droning  
 horn.

—The whistling swain that plods his ring-  
 ing way 315

Where the slow waggon winds along the  
 bay;

The sigh<sup>1</sup> of swallow flocks that twitter-  
 ing sweep,

The solemn curfew swinging long and  
 deep;

The talking boat that moves with pensive  
 sound,

Or drops his anchor down with plunge  
 profound; 320

Of boys that bathe remote the faint  
 uproar,

And restless piper wearying out the shore;  
 These all to swell the village murmurs  
 blend,

That soften'd from the water-head  
 descend.

<sup>1</sup> “Sigh,” a Scotch word, expressive, as Mr. Gilpin explains it, of the sound of the motion of a stick through the air, or of the wind passing through the trees. See Burn's *Cotter's Saturday Night*.

While in sweet cadence rising small and  
still 325  
The far-off minstrels of the haunted hill,  
As the last bleating of the fold expires,  
Tune in the mountain dells their water  
lyres.

Now with religious awe the farewell light  
Blends with the solemn colouring of the  
night; 330

'Mid groves of clouds that crest the moun-  
tain's brow,

And round the West's proud lodge their  
shadows throw,

Like Una<sup>1</sup> shining on her gloomy way,  
The half seen form of Twilight roams  
astray;

Thence, from three paly loopholes mild  
and small, 335

Slow lights upon the lake's still bosom  
fall,

Beyond the mountain's giant reach that  
hides

In deep determin'd gloom his subject  
tides.

—'Mid the dark steeps repose the shadowy  
streams,

As touch'd with dawning moonlight's  
hoary gleams, 340

Long streaks of fairy light the wave  
illumine

With bordering lines of intervening gloom,  
Soft o'er the surface creep the lustres pale  
Tracking with silvering path the change-  
ful gale.

—'Tis restless magic all; at once the  
bright 345

Breaks on the shade, the shade upon the  
light,

Fair Spirits are abroad; in sportive chase  
Brushing with lucid wands the water's  
face,

While music stealing round the glimmer-  
ing deeps

Charms the tall circle of th' enchanted  
steeps. 350

Alluding to this passage of Spenser—

"Her angel face  
As the great eye of Heaven shined bright,  
And made a sunshine in that shady place."

—As thro' th' astonish'd woods the notes  
ascend,

The mountain streams their rising song  
suspend;

Below Eve's listening Star the sheep walk  
stills

It's drowsy tinklings on th' attentive  
hills;

The milkmaid stops her ballad, and her  
pail 355

Stays it's low murmur in th' unbreathing  
vale;

No night-duck clamours for his wilder'd  
mate,

Aw'd, while below the Genii hold their  
state.

—The pomp is fled, and mute the won-  
drous strains,

No wrack of all the pageant scene re-  
mains, 360

So<sup>2</sup> vanish those fair Shadows, human joys,  
But Death alone their vain regret de-  
stroys.

Unheeded Night has overcome the vales,  
On the dark earth the baff'd vision fails,

If peep between the clouds a star on  
high, 365

There turns for glad repose the weary  
eye;

The latest lingerer of the forest train,  
The lone black fir, forsakes the faded  
plain;

Last evening sight, the cottage smoke no  
more,

Lost in the deepen'd darkness, glimmers  
hoar; 370

High towering from the sullen dark-brown  
mere,

Like a black wall, the mountain steeps  
appear,

Thence red from different heights with  
restless gleam

Small cottage lights across the water  
stream,

Nought else of man or life remains be-  
hind 375

To call from other worlds the wilder'd  
mind,

<sup>2</sup> "So break those glittering shadows, human joys."  
Young.

Till pours the wakeful bird her solemn strains  
 Heard<sup>1</sup> by the night-calm of the wat'ry plains.

—No purple prospects now the mind employ

Glowing in golden sunset tints of joy, 380  
 But o'er the sooth'd accordant heart we feel

A sympathetic twilight slowly steal,  
 And ever, as we fondly muse, we find  
 The soft gloom deep'ning on the tranquil mind.

Stay! pensive, sadly-pleasing visions, stay! 385

Ah no! as fades the vale, they fade away.  
 Yet still the tender, vacant gloom remains,

Still the cold cheek its shuddering tear retains.

The bird, with fading light who ceas'd to thread

Silent the hedge or steaming rivulet's bed, 390

From his grey re-appearing tower shall soon

Salute with boding note the rising moon,  
 Frosting with hoary light the pearly ground,

And pouring deeper blue to Æther's bound;

Rejoic'd her solemn pomp of clouds to fold 395

In robes of azure, fleecy white, and gold,  
 While rose and poppy, as the glow-worm fades,

Chequer with paler red the thicket shades.

Now o'er the eastern hill, where Darkness broods

O'er all its vanish'd dells, and lawns, and woods 400

Where but a mass of shade the sight can trace,

She lifts in silence up her lovely face;  
 Above the gloomy valley flings her light,  
 Far to the western slopes with hamlets white;

And gives, where woods the checquer'd upland strew; 405

To the green corn of summer autumn's hue.  
 Thus Hope, first pouring from her blessed horn

Her dawn, far lovelier than the Moon's own morn;

'Till higher mounted, strives in vain to cheer

The weary hills, impervious, black'ning near; 410

—Yet does she still, undaunted, throw the while

On darling spots remote her tempting smile.

—Ev'n now she decks for me a distant scene,

(For dark and broad the gulph of time between)

Gilding that cottage with her fondest ray,  
 (Sole bourn, sole wish, sole object of my way; 415

How fair it's lawn and silvery woods appear!

How sweet it's streamlet murmurs in mine ear!)

Where we, my friend, to golden days shall rise,

'Till our small share of hardly-painingsighs  
 (For sighs will ever trouble human breath)  
 Creep hush'd into the tranquil breast of Death.

But now the clear-bright Moon her zenith gains,

And rimy without speck extend the plains;

The deepest dell the mountain's breast displays, 425

Scarce hides a shadow from her searching rays;

From the dark-blue "faint silvery threads" divide

The hills, while gleams below the azure tide;

The scene is waken'd, yet its peace unbroke,

By silver'd wreaths of quiet charcoal smoke, 430

That, o'er the ruins of the fallen wood,  
 Steal down the hills, and spread along the flood.

<sup>1</sup> "Charming the night-calm with her powerful song." A line of one of our older poets.

|   |   |
|---|---|
| The song of mountain streams unheard by<br>day,   | Sound of clos'd gate, across the water<br>born,       |
| Now hardly heard, beguiles my home-<br>ward way.  | Hurrying the feeding hare thro' rustling<br>corn;     |
| All air is, as the sleeping water, still, 435     | The tremulous sob of the complaining<br>owl;          |
| List'ning th' aëreal music of the hill,           | And at long intervals the mill-dog's<br>howl;         |
| Broke only by the slow clock tolling deep,        | The distant forge's swinging thump pro-<br>found; 445 |
| Or shout that wakes the ferry-man from<br>sleep,  | Or yell in the deep woods of lonely<br>hound.         |
| Soon follow'd by his hollow-parting oar,          |   |
| And echo'd hoof approaching the far<br>shore; 440 |   |

# Descriptive Sketches.

(REPRINTED FROM THE QUARTO OF 1793.)

DESCRIPTIVE SKETCHES. IN VERSE. TAKEN DURING A PEDESTRIAN TOUR IN THE ITALIAN, GRISON, SWISS, AND SAVOYARD ALPS. BY W. WORDSWORTH, B.A., OF ST. JOHN'S, CAMBRIDGE. "LOCA PASTORUM DESERTA ATQUE OTIA DIA."—*Lucret.* "CASTELLA IN TUMULIS—ET LONGE SALTUS LATEQUE VACANTES."—*Virgil.* LONDON: PRINTED FOR J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD. 1793.

TO THE REV. ROBERT JONES, FELLOW OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

DEAR SIR,—However desirous I might have been of giving you proofs of the high place you hold in my esteem, I should have been cautious of wounding your delicacy by thus publicly addressing you, had not the circumstance of my having accompanied you amongst the Alps, seemed to give this dedication a propriety sufficient to do away any scruples which your modesty might otherwise have suggested.

In inscribing this little work to you I consult my Heart. You know well how great is the difference between two companions lolling in a post chaise, and two travellers plodding slowly along the road, side by side, each with his little knapsack of necessities upon his shoulders. How much more of heart between the two latter!

I am happy in being conscious I shall have one reader who will approach the conclusion of these few pages with regret. You they must certainly interest, in re-

minding you of moments to which you can hardly look back without a pleasure not the less dear from a shade of melancholy. You will meet with few images without recollecting the spot where we observed them together, consequently, whatever is feeble in my design, or spiritless in my colouring, will be amply supplied by your own memory.

With still greater propriety I might have inscribed to you a description of some of the features of your native mountains, through which we have wandered together, in the same manner, with so much pleasure. But the sea-sunsets which give such splendour to the vale of Clwyd, Snowdon, the chair of Idris, the quiet village of Bethkelert, Menai and her druids, the Alpine steeps of the Conway, and the still more interesting windings of the wizard stream of the Dee remain yet untouched. Apprehensive that my pencil may never be exercised on these subjects, I cannot let slip this opportunity of thus publicly assuring you with how much affection and esteem, I am, Dear Sir, Your most obedient very humble servant. W. WORDSWORTH.

## ARGUMENT.

Happiness (if she had been to be found on Earth) amongst the Charms of Nature.—Pleasures of the pedestrian Traveller.—Author crosses France to the Alps.—Present state of the Grande Chartreuse.—Lake of Como.—Time, Sunset.—Same Scene, Twilight.—Same Scene, Morning, it's Voluptuous Character; Old Man and Forest Cottage Music.—River Tusa.—Via Mala and Grison Gypsey.—Valley of Sekellenenthal.—Lake of Uri.—Stormy Sunset.—Chapel of William Tell.—Force of Local Emotion. Chamols Chaser.—View of the higher Alps.—Manner of Life of a Swiss Mountaineer interspersed with Views of the higher Alps.—Golden Age of the Alps.—Life and Views continued.—Ranz des Vaches, famous Swiss Air.—Abbey of Einsiedlen and it's Pilgrims.—Valley of Chamouny.—Mont Blanc.—Slavery of Savoy.—Influence of Liberty on Cottage Happiness.—France.—Wish for the Extirpation of Slavery.—Conclusion.

WERE there, below, a spot of holy ground,  
By Pain and her sad family unfound,  
Sure, Nature's GOD that spot to man had  
giv'n,

Where murmuring rivers join the song of  
ev'n;

Where falls the purple morning far and  
wide

In flakes of light upon the mountain-  
side;

Where summer Suns in ocean sink to  
rest,

Or moonlight Upland lifts her hoary  
breast;

Where Silence, on her night of wing, o'er-  
broods

Unfathom'd dells and undiscover'd woods;  
Where rocks and groves the power of  
waters shakes

In cataracts, or sleeps in quiet lakes.

But doubly pitying Nature loves to show'r  
Soft on his wounded heart her healing  
pow'r,

Who plods o'er hills and vales his road  
forlorn,

Wooing her varying charms from eve to  
morn.

No sad vacuities his heart annoy,  
Blows not a Zephyr but it whispers  
joy;

For him lost flowers their idle sweets  
exhale;

He tastes the meanest note that swells  
the gale;

For him sod-seats the cottage-door adorn,  
And peeps the far-off spire, his evening  
bourn!

Dear is the forest frowning o'er his head,  
And dear the green-sward to his velvet  
tread;

Moves there a cloud o'er mid-day's flaming  
eye?

Upward he looks—and calls it luxury;  
Kind Nature's charities his steps attend,  
In every babbling brook he finds a friend,  
While chast'ning thoughts of sweetest  
use, bestow'd

By Wisdom, moralize his pensive road.  
Host of his welcome inn, the noon-tide  
bow'r,

To his spare meal he calls the passing  
poor;

He views the Sun uprear his golden fire,  
Or sink, with heart alive like Memnon's<sup>1</sup>  
lyre;

Blesses the Moon that comes with kindest  
ray

To light him shaken by his viewless way.  
With bashful fear no cottage children steal  
From him, a brother at the cottage meal,  
His humble looks no shy restraint impart,  
Around him plays at will the virgin heart.  
While unsuspended wheels the village

dance,  
The maidens eye him with inquiring  
glance,

Much wondering what sad stroke of craz-  
ing Care

Or desperate Love could lead a wanderer  
there.

Me, lur'd by hope her sorrows to re-  
move,

A heart, that could not much itself ap-  
prove,

O'er Gallia's wastes of corn dejected led,  
Her<sup>2</sup> road elms rustling thin above my  
head,

<sup>1</sup> The lyre of Memnon is reported to have emitted melancholy or cheerful tones, as it was touched by the sun's evening or morning rays.

<sup>2</sup> There are few people whom it may be neces-

Or through her truant pathway's native  
 charms,  
 By secret villages and lonely farms, 50  
 To where the Alps, ascending white in  
 air,  
 Toy with the Sun, and glitter from afar.  
 Ev'n now I sigh at hoary Chartreuse's  
 doom  
 Weeping beneath his chill of mountain  
 gloom.  
 Where now is fled that Power whose frown  
 severe 55  
 Tam'd "sober Reason" till she crouch'd  
 in fear?  
 That breath'd a death-like peace these  
 woods around,  
 Broke only by th' unvaried torrent's  
 sound,  
 Or prayer-bell by the dull cicada  
 drown'd.  
 The cloister startles at the gleam of arms,  
 And Blasphemy the shuddering fane  
 alarms; 61  
 Nod the cloud-piercing pines their troubl'd  
 heads,  
 Spires, rocks, and lawns, a browner night  
 o'erspreads.  
 Strong terror checks the female peasant's  
 sighs,  
 And start th' astonish'd shades at female  
 eyes. 65  
 The thundering tube the aged angler hears,  
 And swells the groaning torrent with his  
 tears.  
 From Bruno's forest screams the frightened  
 jay,  
 And slow th' insulted eagle wheels away.  
 The cross with hideous laughter Demons  
 mock, 70  
 By angels<sup>1</sup> planted on the aerial rock.  
 The "parting Genius" sighs with hollow  
 breath  
 Along the mystic streams of Life and  
 Death<sup>2</sup>,

Swelling the outcry dull, that long re-  
 sounds  
 Portentous, thro' her old woods' trackless  
 bounds, 75  
 Deepening her echoing torrents' awful  
 peal  
 And bidding paler shades her form con-  
 ceal,  
 Vallombre<sup>3</sup>, 'mid her falling fanes, de-  
 plores,  
 For ever broke, the sabbath of her bow'rs.  
 More pleas'd, my foot the hidden  
 margin roves 80  
 Of Como bosom'd deep in chestnut groves.  
 No meadows thrown between, the giddy  
 steeps  
 Tower, bare or silvan, from the narrow  
 deeps.  
 To towns, whose shades of no rude sound  
 complain,  
 To ringing team unknown and grating  
 wain, 85  
 To flat-roof'd towns, that touch the water's  
 bound,  
 Or lurk in woody sunless glens profound,  
 Or from the bending rocks obtrusive cling,  
 And o'er the whiten'd wave their shadows  
 fling;  
 Wild round the steepes the little<sup>4</sup> path-  
 way twines, 90  
 And Silence loves it's purple roof of vines.  
 The viewless lingerer hence, at evening,  
 sees  
 From rock-hewn steps the sail between  
 the trees;  
 Or marks, mid opening cliffs, fair dark-  
 ey'd maids  
 Tend the small harvest of their garden  
 glades, 95  
 Or, led by distant warbling notes, sur-  
 veys,  
 With hollow ringing ears and darkening  
 gaze,

<sup>3</sup> Name of one of the vallies of the Chartreuse.

<sup>4</sup> If any of my readers should ever visit the Lake of Como, I recommend it to him to take a stroll along this charming little pathway; he must chuse the evening, as it is on the western side of the Lake. We pursued it from the foot of the water to its head: it is once interrupted by a ferry.

sary to inform, that the sides of many of the post-roads in France are planted with a row of trees.

<sup>1</sup> Alluding to crosses seen on the tops of the spiry rocks of the Chartreuse, which have every appearance of being inaccessible.

<sup>2</sup> Names of rivers at the Chartreuse.

Binding the charmed soul in powerless  
 trance,  
 Lip-dewing Song and ringlet-tossing  
 Dance,  
 Where sparkling eyes and breaking smiles  
 illumine 100  
 The bosom'd cabin's lyre-enliven'd gloom;  
 Or stops the solemn mountain-shades to  
 view  
 Stretch, o'er their pictur'd mirror, broad  
 and blue,  
 Tracking the yellow sun from steep to  
 steep,  
 As up th' opposing hills, with tortoise  
 foot, they creep. 105  
 Here half a village shines, in gold ar-  
 ray'd,  
 Bright as the moon, half hides itself in  
 shade.  
 From the dark sylvan roofs the restless  
 spire,  
 Inconstant glancing, mounts like spring-  
 ing fire, 109  
 There, all unshaded, blazing forests throw  
 Rich golden verdure on the waves below.  
 Slow glides the sail along th' illumined  
 shore,  
 And steals into the shade the lazy oar.  
 Soft bosoms breathe around contagious  
 sighs,  
 And amorous music on the water dies.  
 Heedless how Pliny, musing here, sur-  
 vey'd  
 Old Roman boats and figures thro' the  
 shade,  
 Pale Passion, overpower'd, retires and  
 woos  
 The thicket, where th' unlisten'd stock-  
 dove coos.  
 How bless'd, delicious Scene! the eye  
 that greets 120  
 Thy open beauties, or thy lone retreats;  
 Th' unwearied sweep of wood thy cliffs  
 that scales,  
 The never-ending waters of thy vales;  
 The cots, those dim religious groves em-  
 bow'r,  
 Or, under rocks that from the water tow'r  
 Insinuated, sprinkling all the shore, 126  
 Each with his household boat beside the  
 door,

Whose flaccid sails in forms fantastic  
 droop,  
 Bright'ning the gloom where thick the  
 forests stoop;  
 —Thy torrents shooting from the clear-  
 blue sky, 130  
 Thy towns, like swallows' nests that cleave  
 on high;  
 That glimmer hoar in eve's last light,  
 descry'd  
 Dim from the twilight water's shaggy  
 side,  
 Whence lutes and voices down th' en-  
 charmed woods  
 Steal, and compose the oar-forgotten  
 floods, 135  
 While Evening's solemn bird melodious  
 weeps,  
 Heard, by star-spotted bays, beneath the  
 steepes;  
 —Thy lake, mid smoking woods, that  
 blue and grey  
 Gleams, streak'd or dappled, hid from  
 morning's ray  
 Slow-travelling down the western hills, to  
 fold 140  
 It's green-ting'd margin in a blaze of gold;  
 From thickly-glittering spires the matin-  
 bell  
 Calling the woodman from his desert cell,  
 A summons to the sound of oars, that pass,  
 Spotting the steaming deeps, to early  
 mass; 145  
 Slow swells the service o'er the water  
 born,  
 While fill each pause the ringing woods of  
 morn.  
 Farewel! those forms that, in thy  
 noon-tide shade,  
 Rest, near their little plots of wheaten  
 glade;  
 Those steadfast eyes, that beating breasts  
 inspire 150  
 To throw the "sultry ray" of young De-  
 sire;  
 Those lips, whose tides of fragrance come,  
 and go,  
 Accordant to the cheek's unquiet glow;  
 Those shadowy breasts in love's soft light  
 array'd,  
 And rising, by the moon of passion sway'd.

—Thy fragrant gales and lute-resounding  
   streams, 156  
 Breathe o'er the failing soul voluptuous  
   dreams;  
 While Slavery, forcing the sunk mind to  
   dwell  
 On joys that might disgrace the captive's  
   cell,  
 Her shameless timbrel shakes along thy  
   marge, 160  
 And winds between thine isles the vocal  
   barge.  
   Yet, arts are thine that rock th' un-  
   sleeping heart,  
 And smiles to Solitude and Want im-  
   part.  
 I lov'd, mid thy most desert woods  
   astray,  
 With pensive step to measure my slow  
   way<sup>1</sup>, 165  
 By lonely, silent cottage-doors to roam,  
 The far-off peasant's day-deserted home;  
 Once did I pierce to where a cabin  
   stood,  
 The redbreast peace had bury'd it in  
   wood,  
 There, by the door a hoary-headed sire  
 Touch'd with his wither'd hand an aged  
   lyre; 171  
 Beneath an old-grey oak as violets lie,  
 Stretch'd at his feet with steadfast, up-  
   ward eye,  
 His children's children join'd the holy  
   sound,  
 A hermit—with his family around. 175  
 Hence shall we seek where fair Locarno  
   smiles  
 Embower'd in walnut slopes and citron  
   isles,  
 Or charms that smile on Tusa's evening  
   stream,  
 While mid dim towers and woods her<sup>2</sup>  
   waters gleam:

<sup>1</sup> "Solo, e pensoso i più deserti campi  
 Vò misurando à passi tardi, e lenti."—  
 PETRARCH.

<sup>2</sup> The river along whose banks you descend in  
 crossing the Alps by the Semplon pass. From  
 the striking contrast of it's features, this pass I  
 should imagine to be the most interesting among  
 the Alps.

From the bright wave, in solemn gloom,  
   retire 180  
 The dull-red steeps, and darkening still,  
   aspire,  
 To where afar rich orange lustres glow  
 Round undistinguish'd clouds, and rocks,  
   and snow;  
 Or, led where Viamala's chasms con-  
   fine  
 Th' indignant waters of the infant Rhine,  
 Bend o'er th' abyss?—the else impervious  
   gloom 186  
 His burning eyes with fearful light  
   illumine.  
 The Grison gypsey here her tent has  
   plac'd,  
 Sole human tenant of the piny waste;  
 Her tawny skin, dark eyes, and glossy  
   locks, 190  
 Bend o'er the smoke that curls beneath  
   the rocks.

—The mind condemn'd, without reprieve,  
   to go  
 O'er life's long deserts with it's charge of  
   woe,  
 With sad congratulation joins the  
   train,  
 Where beasts and men together o'er 195  
   the plain  
 Move on,—a mighty caravan of pain;  
 Hope, strength, and courage, social suffer-  
   ing brings,  
 Freshening the waste of sand with shades  
   and springs.  
 —She solitary through the desert drear  
 Spontaneous wanders, hand in hand with  
   Fear. 200  
 A giant moan along the forest swells  
 Protracted, and the twilight storm fore-  
   tells,  
 And, ruining from the cliffs their deafen-  
   ing load  
 Tumbles, the wildering Thunder slips  
   abroad;  
 On the high summits Darkness comes  
   and goes, 205  
 Hiding their fiery clouds, their rocks, and  
   snows;  
 The torrent, travers'd by the lustre broad,  
 Starts like a horse beside the flashing road;

In the roof'd<sup>1</sup> bridge, at that despairing  
 hour,  
 She seeks a shelter from the battering  
 shower. 210  
 —Fierce comes the river down; the crash-  
 ing wood  
 Gives way, and half it's pines torment  
 the flood;  
 Fearful<sup>2</sup>, beneath, the Water-spirits call,  
 And the bridge vibrates, tottering to its  
 fall.  
 —Heavy, and dull, and cloudy is the  
 night, 215  
 No star supplies the comfort of it's light,  
 Glimmer the dim-lit Alps, dilated, round,  
 And one sole light shifts in the vale  
 profound;  
 While, opposite, the waning moon hangs  
 still,  
 And red, above her melancholy hill. 220  
 By the deep quiet gloom appall'd, she sighs,  
 Stoops her sick head, and shuts her weary  
 eyes.  
 —Breaking th' ascending roar of desert  
 floods,  
 And insect buzz, that stuns the sultry  
 woods,  
 She hears, upon the mountain forest's brow,  
 The death-dog, howling loud and long,  
 below; 226  
 On viewless fingers counts the valley-  
 clock,  
 Followed by drowsy crow of midnight cock.  
 —Bursts from the troubl'd Larch's giant  
 boughs  
 The pie, and chattering breaks the night's  
 repose. 230  
 Low barks the fox: by Havoc rous'd the  
 bear,  
 Quits, growling, the white bones that  
 strew his lair;  
 The dry leaves stir as with the serpent's  
 walk,  
 And, far beneath, Banditti voices talk;

Behind her hill the Moon, all crimson,  
 rides, 235  
 And his red eyes the slinking water  
 hides;  
 Then all is hushed; the bushes rustle near,  
 And with strange tinglings sings her  
 fainting ear.  
 —Vex'd by the darkness, from the piny  
 gulf  
 Ascending, nearer howls the famish'd  
 wolf, 240  
 While thro' the stillness scatters wild  
 dismay,  
 Her babe's small cry, that leads him to  
 his prey.  
 Now, passing Urseren's open vale  
 serene,  
 Her quiet streams, and hills of downy  
 green,  
 Plunge with the Russ embrown'd by  
 Terror's breath, 245  
 Where danger roofs the narrow walks of  
 death;  
 By floods, that, thundering from their  
 dizzy height,  
 Swell more gigantic on the steadfast sight;  
 Black drizzling craggs, that beaten by  
 the din,  
 Vibrate, as if a voice complain'd within;  
 Bare steeps, where Desolation stalks,  
 afraid, 251  
 Unsteadfast, by a blasted yew upstay'd;  
 By cells<sup>3</sup> whose image, trembling as he  
 prays,  
 Awe struck, the kneeling peasant scarce  
 surveys;  
 Loose-hanging rocks the Day's bless'd eye  
 that hide, 255  
 And crosses<sup>4</sup> rear'd to Death on every  
 side,  
 Which with cold kiss Devotion planted  
 near,  
 And, bending, water'd with the human  
 tear,

<sup>1</sup> Most of the bridges among the Alps are of wood and covered: these bridges have a heavy appearance, and rather injure the effect of the scenery in some places.

<sup>2</sup> "Red came the river down, and loud, and oft  
 The angry Spirit of the water shriek'd."

Home's *Douglas*.

<sup>3</sup> The Catholic religion prevails here. These cells are, as is well known, very common in the Catholic countries, planted, like Roman tombs, along the road side.

<sup>4</sup> Crosses commemorative of the deaths of travellers by the fall of snow, and other accidents very common along this dreadful road.

Soon fading "silent" from her upward  
eye,

Unmov'd with each rude form of Danger  
nigh, 260

Fix'd on the anchor left by him who saves  
Alike in whelming snows and roaring  
waves.

On as we move, a softer prospect opes,  
Calm huts, and lawns between, and sylvan  
slopes.

While mists, suspended on th' expiring  
gale, 265

Moveless o'er-hang the deep secluded vale,  
The beams of evening, slipping soft be-  
tween,

Light up of tranquil joy a sober scene;  
Winding it's dark-green wood and eme-  
erald glade,

The still vale lengthens underneath the  
shade; 270

While in soft gloom the scattering bowers  
recede,

Green dewy lights adorn the freshen'd  
mead,

Where solitary forms illumin'd stray  
Turning with quiet touch the valley's  
hay,

On the low<sup>1</sup> brown wood-huts delighted  
sleep 275

Along the brighten'd gloom reposing  
deep.

While pastoral pipes and streams the  
landscape lull,

And bells of passing mules that tinkle  
dull,

In solemn shapes before th' admiring eye  
Dilated hang the misty pines on high,

Huge convent domes with pinnacles and  
tow'rs, 281

And antique castles seen thro' drizzling  
show'rs.

From such romantic dreams my soul  
awake,

Lo! Fear looks silent down on Uri's lake,  
By whose unpathway'd margin still and  
dread 285

Was never heard the plodding peasant's  
tread.

Tower like a wall the naked rocks, or  
reach

Far o'er the secret water dark with beach,  
More high, to where creation seems to  
end,

Shade above shade the desert pines as-  
cend, 290

And still, below, where mid the savage  
scene

Peeps out a little speck of smiling green,  
There with his infants man undaunted  
creeps

And hangs his small wood-hut upon the  
steeps.

A garden-plot the desert air perfumes,  
'Mid the dark pines a little orchard  
blooms, 296

A zig-zag path from the domestic skiff  
Threading the painful cragg surmounts  
the cliff.

—Before those hermit doors, that never  
know 299

The face of traveller passing to and fro,  
No peasant leans upon his pole, to tell  
For whom at morning toll'd the funeral  
bell;

Their watch-dog ne'er his angry bark for-  
goes,

Touch'd by the beggar's moan of human  
woes,

The grassy seat beneath their casement  
shade 305

The pilgrim's wistful eye hath never  
stay'd.

—There, did the iron Genius not dis-  
dain

The gentle Power that haunts the myrtle  
plain,

There might the love-sick maiden sit, and  
chide

Th' insuperable rocks and severing tide,  
There watch at eve her lover's sun-gilt  
sail 311

Approaching, and upbraid the tardy gale,  
There list at midnight till is heard no  
more,

Below, the echo of his parting oar,  
There hang in fear, when growls the  
frozen stream, 315

To guide his dangerous tread the taper's  
gleam.

<sup>1</sup> The houses in the more retired Swiss valleys  
are all built of wood.

'Mid stormy vapours ever driving by,  
 Where ospreys, cormorants, and herons  
 cry,  
 Where hardly giv'n the hopeless waste to  
 cheer  
 Deny'd the bread of life the foodful ear,  
 Dwindles the pear on autumn's latest  
 spray, 321  
 And apple sickens pale in summer's ray,  
 Ev'n here Content has fix'd her smiling  
 reign  
 With Independence child of high Dis-  
 dain.  
 Exulting mid the winter of the skies,  
 Shy as the jealous chamois, Freedom  
 flies, 326  
 And often grasps her sword, and often  
 eyes,  
 Her crest a bough of Winter's bleakest  
 pine,  
 Strange "weeds" and alpine plants her  
 helm entwine,  
 And wildly-pausing oft she hangs aghast,  
 While thrills the "Spartan fife" between  
 the blast. 331  
 'Tis storm; and hid in mist from hour  
 to hour  
 All day the floods a deeper murmur  
 pour,  
 And mournful sounds, as of a Spirit  
 lost,  
 Pipe wild along the hollow-blustering  
 coast, 335  
 'Till the Sun walking on his western  
 field  
 Shakes from behind the clouds his flash-  
 ing shield.  
 Triumphant on the bosom of the storm,  
 Glances the fire-clad eagle's wheeling  
 form;  
 Eastward, in long perspective glittering,  
 shine 340  
 The wood-crown'd cliffs that o'er the lake  
 recline;  
 Wide o'er the Alps a hundred streams  
 unfold,  
 At once to pillars turn'd that flame with  
 gold;  
 Behind his sail the peasant strives to  
 shun  
 The west that burns like one dilated sun,

Where in a mighty crucible expire 346  
 The mountains, glowing hot, like coals of  
 fire.<sup>1</sup>  
 But lo! the boatman, over-aw'd, before  
 The pictur'd fane of Tell suspends his oar;  
 Confused the Marathonian tale appears,  
 While burn in his full eyes the glorious  
 tears. 351  
 And who but feels a power of strong con-  
 troul,  
 Felt only there, oppress his labouring  
 soul,  
 Who walks, where honour'd men of an-  
 cient days  
 Have wrought with god-like arm the  
 deeds of praise? 355  
 Say, who, by thinking on Canadian hills,  
 Or wild Aosta lull'd by Alpine rills,  
 On Zutphen's plain; or where with  
 soften'd gaze  
 The old grey stones the plaided chief  
 surveys,  
 Can guess the high resolve, the cherish'd  
 pain 360  
 Of him whom passion rivets to the plain,  
 Where breath'd the gale that caught  
 Wolfe's happiest sigh,  
 And the last sun-beam fell on Bayard's eye,  
 Where bleeding Sydney from the cup  
 retir'd,  
 And glad Dundee in "faint huzza's" ex-  
 pir'd. 365

<sup>1</sup> I had once given to these sketches the title of Picturesque; but the Alps are insulted in applying to them that term. Whoever, in attempting to describe their sublime features, should confine himself to the cold rules of painting would give his reader but a very imperfect idea of those emotions which they have the irresistible power of communicating to the most impassive imaginations. The fact is, that controuling influence, which distinguishes the Alps from all other scenery, is derived from images which disdain the pencil. Had I wished to make a picture of this scene I had thrown much less light into it. But I consulted nature and my feelings. The ideas excited by the stormy sunset I am here describing owed their sublimity to that deluge of light, or rather of fire, in which nature had wrapped the immense forms around me; any intrusion of shade, by destroying the unity of the impression, had necessarily diminished it's grandeur.

But now with other soul I stand alone  
 Sublime upon this far-surveying cone,  
 And watch from pike<sup>1</sup> to pike amid the  
 sky

Small as a bird the chamois-chaser fly.  
 'Tis his with fearless step at large to roam  
 Thro' wastes, of Spirits wing'd the solemn  
 home, 371  
 Thro'<sup>2</sup> vacant worlds where Nature never  
 gave

A brook to murmur or a bough to wave,  
 Which unsubstantial Phantoms sacred  
 keep;

Thro' worlds where Life and Sound, and  
 Motion sleep, 375  
 Where Silence still her death-like reign  
 extends,

Save when the startling cliff unfrequent  
 rends:

In the deep snow the mighty ruin drown'd,  
 Mocks the dull ear of Time with deaf  
 abortive sound;

—To mark a planet's pomp and steady  
 light 380

In the least star of scarce-appearing night,  
 And neighbouring moon, that coasts the  
 vast profound,

Wheel pale and silent her diminish'd  
 round,

While far and wide the icy summits blaze  
 Rejoicing in the glory of her rays; 385  
 The star of noon that glitters small and  
 bright,

Shorn of his beams, insufferably white,  
 And flying fleet behind his orb to view  
 Th' interminable sea of sable blue.

—Of cloudless suns no more ye frost-built  
 spires 390

Refract in rainbow hues the restless fires!  
 Ye dewy mists the arid rocks o'er-spread  
 Whose slippery face derides his deathful  
 tread!

—To wet the peak's impracticable sides  
 He opens of his feet the sanguine tides,

<sup>1</sup> Pike is a word very commonly used in the north of England, to signify a high mountain of the conic form, as Langdale pike, &c.

<sup>2</sup> For most of the images in the next sixteen verses I am indebted to M. Raymond's interesting observations annexed to his translation of Coxe's Tour in Switzerland.

Weak and more weak the issuing current  
 eyes 396

Lapp'd by the panting tongue of thirsty  
 skies<sup>3</sup>.

—At once bewildering mists around him  
 close,

And cold and hunger are his least of  
 woes; 399

The Demon of the snow with angry roar  
 Descending, shuts for aye his prison door.  
 Craz'd by the strength of hope at morn  
 he eyes

As sent from heav'n the raven of the skies,  
 Then with despair's whole weight his  
 spirits sink,

No bread to feed him, and the snow his  
 drink, 405

While ere his eyes can close upon the  
 day,

The eagle of the Alps o'er shades his prey.  
 —Meanwhile his wife and child with  
 cruel hope

All night the door at every moment ope;  
 Haply that child in fearful doubt may  
 gaze, 410

Passing his father's bones in future days,  
 Start at the reliques of that very thigh,  
 On which so oft he prattled when a boy.

Hence shall we turn where, heard with  
 fear afar,

Thunders thro' echoing pines the head-  
 long Aar? 415

Or rather stay to taste the mild delights  
 Of pensive Underwalden's<sup>4</sup> pastoral  
 heights?

—Is there who mid these awful wilds  
 has seen

The native Genii walk the mountain  
 green?

Or heard, while other worlds their charms  
 reveal, 420

Soft music from th' aerial summit steal?

<sup>3</sup> The rays of the sun drying the rocks frequently produce on their surface a dust so subtle and slippery, that the wretched chamois-chasers are obliged to bleed themselves in the legs and feet in order to secure a footing.

<sup>4</sup> The people of this Canton are supposed to be of a more melancholy disposition than the other inhabitants of the Alps: this, if true, may proceed from their living more secluded.

While o'er the desert, answering every  
close,  
Rich steam of sweetest perfume comes  
and goes.  
—And sure there is a secret Power that  
reigns  
Here, where no trace of man the spot  
profanes, 425  
Nought but the herds that pasturing up-  
ward creep,  
Hung dim-discover'd from the dangerous  
steep,  
Or summer hamlet<sup>1</sup>, flat and bare, on high  
Suspended, mid the quiet of the sky. 429  
How still! no irreligious sound or sight  
Rouzes the soul from her severe delight.  
An idle voice the sabbath region fills  
Of Deep that calls to Deep across the hills,  
Broke only by the melancholy sound  
Of drowsy bells for ever tinkling round;  
Faint wail of eagle melting into blue 436  
Beneath the cliffs, and pine-woods steady  
sugh<sup>2</sup>;  
The solitary heifer's deepen'd low;  
Or rumbling heard remote of falling snow.  
Save that, the stranger seen below, the  
boy 440  
Shouts from the echoing hills with savage  
joy.  
When warm from myrtle bays and  
tranquil seas,  
Comes on, to whisper hope, the vernal  
breeze<sup>3</sup>;  
When hums the mountain bee in May's  
glad ear,  
And emerald isles to spot the heights  
appear, 445  
When shouts and lowing herds the valley  
fill,  
And louder torrents stun the noon-tide  
hill,

<sup>1</sup> These summer hamlets are most probably (as I have seen observed by a critic in the *Gentleman's Magazine*) what Virgil alludes to in the expression "Castella in tumulis"

<sup>2</sup> Sugh, a Scotch word expressive of the sound of the wind through the trees.

<sup>3</sup> This wind, which announces the spring to the Swiss, is called in their language *Föhn*; and is according to M. Raymond the *Syroco* of the Italians.

When fragrant scents beneath th' en-  
chanted tread  
Spring up, his little all around him spread,  
The pastoral Swiss begins the cliffs to  
scale, 450  
To silence leaving the deserted vale,  
Up the green mountain tracking Sum-  
mer's feet,  
Each twilight earlier call'd the Sun to  
meet,  
With earlier smile the ray of morn to view  
Fall on his shifting hut that gleams mid  
smoking dew; 455  
Bless'd with his herds, as in the patri-  
arch's age,  
The summer long to feed from stage to  
stage;  
O'er azure pikes serene and still, they go,  
And hear the rattling thunder far below;  
Or lost at eve in sudden mist the day 460  
Attend, or dare with minute-steps their  
way;  
Hang from the rocks that tremble o'er  
the steep,  
And tempt the icy valley yawning deep,  
O'er-walk the chasmy torrent's foam-lit  
bed,  
Rock'd on the dizzy larch's narrow tread,  
Whence Danger leans, and pointing ghast-  
ly, joys 466  
To mock the mind with "desperation's  
toys";  
Or steal beneath loose mountains, half-  
deter'd,  
That sigh and shudder to the lowing herd.  
—I see him, up the midway cliff he creeps  
To where a scanty knot of verdure peeps,  
Thence down the steep a pile of grass he  
throws  
The fodder of his herds in winter snows.  
Far different life to what tradition hoar  
Transmits of days more bless'd in times  
of yore<sup>4</sup>. 475

<sup>4</sup> This tradition of the golden age of the Alps, as M. Raymond observes, is highly interesting, interesting not less to the philosopher than to the poet. Here I cannot help remarking, that the superstitions of the Alps appear to be far from possessing that poetical character which so eminently distinguishes those of Scotland and the other mountainous northern countries. The

Then Summer lengthen'd out his season  
 bland,  
 And with rock-honey flow'd the happy  
 land.  
 Continual fountains welling cheer'd the  
 waste,  
 And plants were wholesome, now of dead-  
 ly taste.  
 Nor Winter yet his frozen stores had  
 pill'd 480  
 Usurping where the fairest herbage  
 smil'd;  
 Nor Hunger forc'd the herds from pas-  
 tures bare  
 For scanty food the treacherous cliffs to  
 dare.  
 Then the milk-thistle bad those herds  
 demand  
 Three times a day the pail and welcome  
 hand. 485  
 But human vices have provok'd the rod  
 Of angry Nature to avenge her God.  
 Thus does the father to his sons relate,  
 On the lone mountain top, their chang'd  
 estate. 489  
 Still, Nature, ever just, to him imparts  
 Joys only given to uncorrupted hearts.  
 —'Tis morn: with gold the verdant moun-  
 tain glows,  
 More high, the snowy peaks with hues of  
 rose.  
 Far stretch'd beneath the many-tinted  
 hills,  
 A mighty waste of mist the valley fills,  
 A solemn sea! whose vales and moun-  
 tains round 496  
 Stand motionless, to awful silence bound.  
 A gulf of gloomy blue, that opens wide  
 And bottomless, divides the midway tide.  
 Like leaning masts of stranded ships  
 appear 500  
 The pines that near the coast their sum-  
 mits rear  
 Of cabins, woods, and lawns a pleasant  
 shore  
 Bounds calm and clear the chaos still  
 and hoar;

Devil with his horns, &c., seems to be, in their  
 idea, the principal agent that brings about the  
 sublime natural revolutions that take place daily  
 before their eyes.

Loud thro' that midway gulf ascending,  
 sound  
 Unnumber'd streams with hollow roar  
 profound. 505  
 Mounts thro' the nearer mist the chaunt  
 of birds,  
 And talking voices, and the low of herds,  
 The bark of dogs, the drowsy tinkling bell,  
 And wild-wood mountain lutes of saddest  
 swell.  
 Think not, suspended from the cliff on  
 high 510  
 He looks below with undelighted eye.  
 —No vulgar joy is his, at even tide  
 Stretch'd on the scented mountain's pur-  
 ple side.  
 For as the pleasures of his simple day  
 Beyond his native valley hardly stray, 515  
 Nought round it's darling precincts can  
 he find  
 But brings some past enjoyment to his  
 mind,  
 While Hope that ceaseless leans on Plea-  
 sure's urn  
 Binds her wild wreathes, and whispers  
 his return.  
 Once Man entirely free, alone and  
 wild, 520  
 Was bless'd as free—for he was Nature's  
 child.  
 He, all superior but his God disdain'd,  
 Walk'd none restraining, and by none  
 restrain'd,  
 Confess'd no law but what his reason  
 taught,  
 Did all he wish'd, and wish'd but what he  
 ought. 525  
 As Man in his primæval dower ar-  
 ray'd  
 The image of his glorious sire display'd,  
 Ev'n so, by vestal Nature guarded, here  
 The traces of primæval Man appear.  
 The native dignity no forms debase, 530  
 The eye sublime, and surly lion-grace.  
 The slave of none, of beasts alone the lord,  
 He marches with his flute, his book, and  
 sword,  
 Well taught by that to feel his rights,  
 prepar'd  
 With this "the blessings he enjoys to  
 guard." 535

And as on glorious ground he draws his  
breath,  
Where Freedom oft, with Victory and  
Death,  
Hath seen in grim array amid their  
Storms  
Mixed with auxiliar Rocks, three hundred  
Forms<sup>1</sup>;  
While twice ten thousand corselets at the  
view  
Dropp'd loud at once, Oppression shriek'd,  
and flew.  
Oft as those sainted Rocks before him  
spread,  
An unknown power connects him with  
the dead.  
For images of other worlds are there,  
Awful the light, and holy is the air. 545  
Uncertain thro' his fierce uncultur'd soul  
Like lighted tempests troubled transports  
roll;  
To viewless realms his Spirit towers  
amain,  
Beyond the senses and their little reign.  
And oft, when pass'd that solemn vision  
by, 550  
He holds with God himself communion  
high,  
When the dread peal of swelling torrents  
fills  
The sky-roof'd temple of the eternal  
hills,  
And savage Nature humbly joins the  
rite,  
While flash her upward eyes severe de-  
light. 555  
Or gazing from the mountain's silent brow,  
Bright stars of ice and azure worlds of  
snow,

<sup>1</sup> Alluding to several battles which the Swiss in very small numbers have gained over their oppressors, the house of Austria; and in particular, to one fought at Naefels near Glarus, where three hundred and thirty men defeated an army of between fifteen and twenty thousand Austrians. Scattered over the valley are to be found eleven stones, with this inscription 1388, the year the battle was fought, marking out as I was told upon the spot, the several places where the Austrians attempting to make a stand were repulsed anew.

Where needle peaks of granite shooting  
bare  
Tremble in ever-varying tints of air,  
Great joy by horror tam'd dilates his  
heart, 560  
And the near heav'n's their own delights  
impart.  
—When the Sun bids the gorgeous scene  
farewell,  
Alps overlooking Alps their state up-  
swell;  
Huge Pikes of Darkness named, of Fear<sup>2</sup>  
and Storms,  
Lift, all serene, their still, illumin'd  
forms, 565  
In sea-like reach of prospect round him  
spread,  
Ting'd like an angel's smile all rosy red.  
When downward to his winter hut he  
goes,  
Dear and more dear the lessening circle  
grows,  
The hut which from the hills his eyes  
employs 570  
So oft, the central point of all his joys.  
And as a swift by tender cares oppress'd  
Peeps often ere she dart into her nest,  
So to th' untrodden floor, where round  
him looks  
His father helpless as the babe he  
rocks, 575  
Oft he descends to nurse the brother  
pair,  
Till storm and driving ice blockade him  
there;  
There hears, protected by the woods  
behind,  
Secure, the chiding of the baffled wind,  
Hears Winter, calling all his Terrors  
round, 580  
Rush down the living rocks with whirl-  
wind sound.  
Thro' Nature's vale his homely pleasures  
glide  
Unstain'd by envy, discontent, and pride,  
The bound of all his vanity to deck  
With one bright bell a favourite heifer's  
neck; 585

<sup>2</sup> As Schreck-Horn, the pike of terror. Wetter-Horn the pike of storms, &c., &c.

Content upon some simple annual feast,  
Remember'd half the year, and hop'd the  
rest,

If dairy produce, from his inner hoard,  
Of thrice ten summers consecrate the  
board.

—Alas! in every clime a flying ray 590  
Is all we have to cheer our wintry way,  
Condemn'd, in mists and tempests ever  
rife,

To pant slow up the endless Alp of life.  
“Here,” cried a swain, whose venerable  
head

Bloom'd with the snow-drops of Man's  
narrow bed, 595

Last night, while by his dying fire, as  
clos'd

The day, in luxury my limbs repos'd,  
“Here Penury oft from misery's mount  
will guide

Ev'n to the summer door his icy tide,  
And here the avalanche of Death destroy  
The little cottage of domestic Joy. 601  
But, ah! th' unwilling mind may more  
than trace

The general sorrows of the human race:  
The churlish gales, that unremitting blow  
Cold from necessity's continual snow, 605

To us the gentle groups of bliss deny  
That on the noon-day bank of leisure lie.  
Yet more; the tyrant Genius, still at strife  
With all the tender Charities of life,

When close and closer they begin to  
strain, 610

No fond hand left to staunch th' unclosing  
vein,

Tearing their bleeding ties leaves Age to  
groan

On his wet bed, abandon'd and alone.  
For ever, fast as they of strength become  
To pay the filial debt, for food to roam,

The father forc'd by Powers that only  
deign 616

That solitary Man disturb their reign,  
From his bare nest amid the storms of  
heaven

Drives, eagle-like, his sons as he was  
driven,

His last dread pleasure! watches to the  
plain— 620

And never, eagle-like, beholds again.”

When the poor heart has all its joys  
resign'd,

Why does their sad remembrance cleave  
behind?

Lo! by the lazy Seine the exile roves,  
Or where thick sails illumine Batavia's  
groves; 625

Soft o'er the waters mournful measures  
swell,

Unlocking bleeding Thought's “memorial  
cell;”

At once upon his heart Despair has set  
Her seal, the mortal tear his cheek has wet;

Strong poison not a form of steel can brave  
Bows his young hairs with sorrow to the  
grave<sup>1</sup>. 631

Gay lark of hope thy silent song  
resume!

Fair smiling lights the purpled hills  
illumine!

Soft gales and dews of life's delicious  
morn,

And thou! lost fragrance of the heart  
return! 635

Soon<sup>2</sup> flies the little joy to man allow'd,  
And tears before him travel like a cloud.

For come Diseases on, and Penury's rage,  
Labour, and Pain, and Grief, and joyless  
Age,

And Conscience dogging close his bleeding  
way 640

Cries out, and leads her Spectres to their  
prey,

'Till Hope-deserted, long in vain his  
breath

Implores the dreadful untried sleep of  
Death.

—Mid savage rocks and seas of snow that  
shine

Between interminable tracts of pine, 645  
Round a lone fane the human Genii  
mourn,

Where fierce the rays of woe collected  
burn.

<sup>1</sup> The effect of the famous air, called in French *Ranz des Vaches*, upon the Swiss troops removed from their native country is well known, as also the injunction of not playing it on pain of death, before the regiments of that nation, in the service of France and Holland.

<sup>2</sup> *Optima quaeque dies, &c.*

—From viewless lamps a ghastly dimness  
falls,  
And ebbs uncertain on the troubled walls,  
Dim dreadful faces thro' the gloom  
appear, 650  
Abortive Joy, and Hope that works in  
fear,  
While strives a secret Power to hush the  
croud,  
Pain's wild rebellious burst proclaims her  
rights aloud.  
Oh give not me that eye of hard  
disdain  
That views undimm'd Einsiedlen's wretch-  
ed fane<sup>1</sup>, 655  
Mid muttering prayers all sounds of tor-  
ment meet,  
Dire clap of hands, distracted chase of  
feet,  
While loud and dull ascends the weeping  
cry,  
Surely in other thoughts contempt may  
die.  
If the sad grave of human ignorance  
bear 660  
One flower of hope—Oh pass and leave it  
there.  
—The tall Sun, tip-toe on an Alpine  
spire,  
Flings o'er the desert blood-red streams  
of fire.  
At such an hour there are who love to  
stray,  
And meet the gladdening pilgrims on  
their way. 665  
—Now with joy's tearful kiss each other  
greet,  
Nor longer naked be your way-worn feet,  
For ye have reach'd at last the happy  
shore,  
Where the charm'd worm of pain shall  
gnaw no more.  
How gayly murmur and how sweetly  
taste 670  
The fountains<sup>2</sup> rear'd for you amid the  
waste!

Yes I will see you when ye first behold  
Those turrets tipp'd by hope with morn-  
ing gold,  
And watch, while on your brows the cross  
ye make, 675  
Round your pale eyes a wintry lustre  
wake. 675  
—Without one hope her written griefs to  
blot,  
Save in the land where all things are  
forgot,  
My heart, alive to transports long un-  
known,  
Half wishes your delusion were it's  
own.  
Last let us turn to where Chamouny<sup>3</sup>  
shields, 680  
Bosom'd in gloomy woods, her golden  
fields,  
Five streams of ice amid her cots de-  
scend,  
And with wild flowers and blooming  
orchards blend,  
A scene more fair than what the Grecian  
feigns  
Of purple lights and even vernal  
plains. 685  
Here lawns and shades by breezy rivulets  
fann'd,  
Here all the Seasons revel hand in  
hand.  
—Red stream the cottage lights; the  
landscape fades,  
Erroneous wavering mid the twilight  
shades.  
Alone ascends that mountain nam'd of  
white<sup>4</sup> 690  
That dallies with the Sun the summer  
night.  
Six thousand years amid his lonely bounds  
The voice of Ruin, day and night, re-  
sounds.

for the accommodation of the pilgrims, in their  
ascent of the mountain. Under those sheds the  
sentimental traveller and the philosopher may  
find interesting sources of meditation.

<sup>3</sup> This word is pronounced upon the spot Cha-  
mouny, I have taken the liberty of reading it long  
thinking it more musical.

<sup>4</sup> It is only from the higher part of the valley  
of Chamouny that Mont Blanc is visible.

<sup>1</sup> This shrine is resorted to, from a hope of  
relief, by multitudes, from every corner of the  
Catholic world, labouring under mental or bodily  
afflictions.

<sup>2</sup> Rude fountains built and covered with sheds

Where Horror-led his sea of ice assails,  
Havoc and Chaos blast a thousand vales,  
In waves, like two enormous serpents,  
wind 696

And drag their length of deluge train  
behind.

Between the pine's enormous boughs  
descri'd

Serene he towers, in deepest purple dy'd;  
Glad Day-light laughs upon his top of  
snow, 700

Glitter the stars above, and all is black  
below.

At such an hour I heav'd the human  
sigh,

When roar'd the sullen Arve in anger by,  
That not for thee, delicious vale! unfold  
Thy reddening orchards, and thy fields of  
gold; 705

That thou, the slave of slaves<sup>1</sup>, art  
doom'd to pine,

While no Italian arts their charms com-  
bine

To teach the skirt of thy dark cloud to  
shine;

For thy poor babes that, hurrying from  
the door,

With pale-blue hands, and eyes that fix'd  
implore, 710

Dead muttering lips, and hair of hungry  
white,

Besiege the traveller whom they half  
affright.

—Yes, were it mine, the cottage meal to  
share

Forc'd from my native mountains bleak  
and bare;

O'er Anet's<sup>2</sup> hopeless seas of marsh to  
stray, 715

Her shrill winds roaring round my lonely  
way;

To scent the sweets of Piedmont's breath-  
ing rose,

And orange gale that o'er Lugano blows;  
In the wide range of many a weary round,

Still have my pilgrim feet unfailing  
found, 720

As despot courts their blaze of gems  
display,

Ev'n by the secret cottage far away  
The lily of domestic joy decay;

While Freedom's farthest hamlets bless-  
ings share,

Found still beneath her smile, and only  
there. 725

The casement shade more luscious wood-  
bine binds,

And to the door a neater pathway winds,  
At early morn the careful housewife, led

To cull her dinner from it's garden bed,  
Of weedless herbs a healthier prospect

sees, 730

While hum with busier joy her happy  
bees;

In brighter rows her table wealth aspires,  
And laugh with merrier blaze her even-  
ing fires;

Her infant's cheeks with fresher roses  
glow,

And wilder graces sport around their  
brow; 735

By clearer taper lit a cleanlier board  
Receives at supper hour her tempting  
hoard;

The chamber hearth with fresher boughs  
is spread,

And whiter is the hospitable bed.  
—And thou! fair favoured region! which

my soul 740

Shall love, 'till Life has broke her golden  
bowl,

Till Death's cold touch her cistern-wheel  
assail,

And vain regret and vain desire shall fail;  
Tho' now, where erst the grey-clad peasant

stray'd,

To break the quiet of the village shade  
Gleam war's<sup>3</sup> discordant habits thro' the  
trees, 746

And the red banner mock the sullen  
breeze;

'Tho' now no more thy maids their voices  
suit

To the low-warbled breath of twilight  
lute,

<sup>1</sup> It is scarce necessary to observe that these lines  
were written before the emancipation of Savoy.

<sup>2</sup> A vast extent of marsh so called near the  
lake of Neufchatel.

<sup>3</sup> This, as may be supposed, was written before  
France became the seat of war.

And heard, the pausing village hum be-  
 tween, 750  
 No solemn songstress lull the fading green,  
 Scared by the life, and rumbling drum's  
 alarms,  
 And the short thunder, and the flash of  
 arms;  
 While, as Night bids the startling uproar  
 die,  
 Sole sound, the sould<sup>1</sup> renews his mourn-  
 ful cry: 755  
 —Yet, hast thou found that Freedom  
 spreads her pow'r  
 Beyond the cottage hearth, the cottage  
 door:  
 All nature smiles; and owns beneath her  
 eyes  
 Her fields peculiar, and peculiar skies.  
 Yes, as I roam'd where Loiret's<sup>2</sup> waters  
 glide 760  
 Thro' rustling aspens heard from side to  
 side,

<sup>1</sup> An insect so called, which emits a short, melancholy cry, heard, at the close of the summer evenings, on the banks of the Loire.

<sup>2</sup> The river Loiret, which has the honour of giving name to a department, rises out of the earth at a place, called La Source, a league and a half south-east of Orleans, and taking at once the character of a considerable stream, winds under a most delicious bank, on its left, with a flat country of meadows, woods, and vineyards on its right, till it falls into the Loire about three or four leagues below Orleans. The hand of false taste has committed on its banks those outrages which the Abbé de Lille so pathetically deprecates in those charming verses descriptive of the Seine, visiting in secret the retreat of his friend Watelet. Much as the Loiret, in its short course, suffers from injudicious ornament, yet are there spots to be found upon its banks as soothing as meditation could wish for: the curious traveller may meet with some of them where it loses itself among the mills in the neighbourhood of the villa called La Fontaine. The walks of La Source, where it takes its rise, may, in the eyes of some people, derive an additional interest from the recollection that they were the retreat of Bolingbroke during his exile, and that here it was that his philosophical works were chiefly composed. The inscriptions of which he speaks in one of his letters to Swift descriptive of this spot, are not, I believe, now extant. The gardens have been modelled within these twenty years according to a plan evidently not dictated by the taste of the friend of Pope.

When from october clouds a milder  
 light  
 Fell, where the blue flood rippled into  
 white,  
 Methought from every cot the watchful  
 bird  
 Crowed with ear-piercing power 'till then  
 unheard; 765  
 Each clacking mill, that broke the mur-  
 muring streams,  
 Rock'd the charm'd thought in more de-  
 lightful dreams,  
 Chasing those long long dreams the fall-  
 ing leaf  
 Awoke a fainter pang of moral grief;  
 The measured echo of the distant flail 770  
 Winded in sweeter cadence down the  
 vale;  
 A more majestic tide the water<sup>3</sup> roll'd  
 And glowed the sun-gilt groves in richer  
 gold:  
 —Tho' Liberty shall soon, indignant, raise  
 Red on his hills his beacon's comet  
 blaze;  
 Bid from on high his lonely cannon  
 sound,  
 And on ten thousand hearths his shout  
 rebound;  
 His larum-bell from village-tow'r to tow'r  
 Swing on th' astounded ear it's dull un-  
 dying roar:  
 Yet, yet rejoice, tho' Pride's perverted  
 ire 780  
 Rouze Hell's own aid, and wrap thy hills  
 in fire.  
 Lo! from th' innocuous flames, a lovely  
 birth!  
 With it's own Virtues springs another  
 earth:  
 Nature, as in her prime, her virgin reign  
 Begins, and Love and Truth compose her  
 train; 785  
 With pulseless hand, and fix'd unwearied  
 gaze,  
 Unbreathing Justice her still beam sur-  
 veys:

<sup>3</sup> The duties upon many of the French rivers were so exorbitant that the poorer people, deprived of the benefit of water carriage, were obliged to transport their goods by land.

No more, along thy vales and viny groves,  
Whole hamlets disappearing as he moves,  
With cheeks o'erspread by smiles of bale-  
ful glow,

On his pale horse shall fell Consumption  
go. 790

Oh give, great God, to Freedom's waves  
to ride  
Sublime o'er Conquest, Avarice, and  
Pride,

To break, the vales where Death with  
Famine scow'rs,  
And dark Oppression builds her thick-  
ribb'd tow'rs;

Where Machination her fell soul re-  
signs, 795

Fled panting to the centre of her  
mines;

Where Persecution decks with ghastly  
smiles

Her bed, his mountains mad Ambition  
piles;

Where Discord stalks dilating, every  
hour, 800

And crouching fearful at the feet of  
Pow'r,

Like Lightnings eager for th' almighty  
word,

Look up for sign of havoc, Fire and  
Sword<sup>1</sup>,

—Give them, beneath their breast while  
Gladness springs,

To brood the nations o'er with Nile-like  
wings; 805

And grant that every sceptred child of  
clay,

Who cries, presumptuous, "here their  
tides shall stay,"

Swept in their anger from th' affrighted  
shore,

With all his creatures sink—to rise no  
more.

To-night, my friend, within this humble  
cot 810

Be the dead load of mortal ills forgot,  
Renewing, when the rosy summits glow

At morn, our various journey, sad and  
slow.

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<sup>1</sup> ————— And, at his heels,  
Leash'd in like hounds, should Famine,  
Sword, and Fire,  
Crouch for employment.

# SUPPLEMENT OF PIECES NOT APPEAR- ING IN THE EDITION OF 1849-50;

ARRANGED IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER.

## I.

### LINES

WRITTEN AS A SCHOOL EXERCISE AT  
HAWKSHEAD, ANNO ETATIS 14.

[Composed 1784-5.—Published 1851 (*Memoirs of W.*)]

"I was called upon, among other scholars," Wordsworth says, "to write verses upon the completion of the second centenary from the foundation of the school in 1535, by Archbishop Sandys. The verses were much admired, far more than they deserved, for they were but a tame imitation of Pope's versification, and a little in his style. This exercise, however, put it into my head to compose verses from the impulse of my own mind, and I wrote, while yet a schoolboy, a long poem running upon my own adventures, and the scenery of the country in which I was brought up. The only part of that poem which has been preserved is the conclusion of it, which stands at the beginning of my collected Poems." (See *Extract from the Conclusion of a Poem*, &c., page 1.)—Ed.

"And has the Sun his flaming chariot  
driven  
Two hundred times around the ring of  
heaven,  
Since Science first, with all her sacred  
train,  
Beneath yon roof began her heavenly  
reign?  
While thus I mused, methought, before  
mine eyes,  
The Power of EDUCATION seemed to rise;  
Not she whose rigid precepts trained the  
boy  
Dead to the sense of every finer joy;  
Nor that vile wretch who bade the tender  
age  
Spurn Reason's law and humour Passion's  
rage;  
But she who trains the generous British  
youth  
In the bright paths of fair majestic Truth:  
Emerging slow from Academus' grove  
In heavenly majesty she seem'd to move.

Stern was her forehead, but a smile serene  
'Softened the terrors of her awful mien.'<sup>16</sup>  
Close at her side were all the powers,  
design'd

To curb, exalt, reform the tender mind:  
With panting breast, now pale as winter  
snows,

Now flush'd as Hebe, Emulation rose;<sup>20</sup>  
Shame follow'd after with reverted eye,  
And hue far deeper than the Tyrian dye;  
Last Industry appear'd with steady pace.  
A smile sat beaming on her pensive face.  
I gazed upon the visionary train,<sup>25</sup>  
Threw back my eyes, return'd, and gazed  
again.

When lo! the heavenly goddess thus began,  
Through all my frame the pleasing accents  
ran.

"When Superstition left the golden  
light

And fled indignant to the shades of night:  
When pure Religion rear'd the peaceful  
breast<sup>32</sup>

And lull'd the warring passions into rest,  
Drove far away the savage thoughts that  
roll

In the dark mansions of the bigot's soul,  
Enlivening Hope display'd her cheerful ray,  
And beam'd on Britain's sons a brighter  
day;<sup>36</sup>

So when on Ocean's face the storm subsides,  
Hush'd are the winds and silent are the  
tides;

The God of day, in all the pomp of light,  
Moves through the vault of heaven, and  
dissipates the night;<sup>40</sup>

Wide o'er the main a trembling lustre plays,  
The glittering waves reflect the dazzling  
blaze;

Science with joy saw Superstition fly  
Before the lustre of Religion's eye;  
With rapture she beheld Britannia smile,  
Clapp'd her strong wings, and sought the  
cheerful isle,<sup>46</sup>

The shades of night no more the soul  
involve,  
She sheds her beam, and, lo! the shades  
dissolve;

No jarring monks, to gloomy cell confined,  
 With mazy rules perplex the weary mind;  
 No shadowy forms entice the soul aside, 51  
 Secure she walks, Philosophy her guide.  
 Britain, who long her warriors had adored,  
 And deem'd all merit centred in the sword;  
 Britain, who thought to stain the field was  
 fame, 55  
 Now honour'd Edward's less than Bacon's  
 name.  
 Her sons no more in listed fields advance  
 To ride the ring, or toss the beamy lance;  
 No longer steel their indurated hearts  
 To the mild influence of the finer arts; 60  
 Quick to the secret grotto they retire  
 To court majestic truth, or wake the golden  
 lyre;  
 By generous Emulation taught to rise,  
 The seats of learning brave the distant  
 skies.  
 Then noble Sandys, inspir'd with great  
 design, 65  
 Reared Hawkshead's happy roof, and call'd  
 it mine.  
 There have I loved to show the tender age  
 The golden precepts of the classic page;  
 To lead the mind to those Elysian plains  
 Where, throned in gold, immortal Science  
 reigns; 70  
 Fair to the view is sacred Truth display'd,  
 In all the majesty of light array'd,  
 To teach, on rapid wings, the curious soul  
 To roam from heaven to heaven, from pole  
 to pole,  
 From thence to search the mystic cause of  
 things 75  
 And follow Nature to her secret springs;  
 Nor less to guide the fluctuating youth  
 Firm in the sacred paths of moral truth,  
 To regulate the mind's disordered frame,  
 And quench the passions kindling into  
 flame; 80  
 The glimmering fires of Virtue to enlarge,  
 And purge from Vice's dross my tender  
 charge.  
 Oft have I said, the paths of Fame pursue,  
 And all that Virtue dictates, dare to do;  
 Go to the world, peruse the book of man,  
 And learn from thence thy own defects to  
 scan; 86  
 Severely honest, break no plighted trust,  
 But coldly rest not here—be more than  
 just;  
 Join to the rigours of the sires of Rome  
 The gentler manners of the private dome;  
 When Virtue weeps in agony of woe, 91  
 Teach from the heart the tender tear to  
 flow;  
 If Pleasure's soothing song thy soul en-  
 tice,  
 Or all the gaudy pomp of splendid Vice,

Arise superior to the Siren's power, 95  
 The wretch, the short-lived vision of an  
 hour;  
 Soon fades her cheek, her blushing beauties  
 fly,  
 As fades the chequer'd bow that paints the  
 sky.

“So shall thy sire, whilst hope his  
 breast inspires,  
 And wakes anew life's glimmering trem-  
 bling fires, 100  
 Hear Britain's sons rehearse thy praise  
 with joy,  
 Look up to heaven, and bless his darling  
 boy.  
 If e'er these precepts quell'd the passions'  
 strife,  
 If e'er they smooth'd the rugged walks of  
 life,  
 If e'er they pointed forth the blissful way  
 That guides the spirit to eternal day, 106  
 Do thou, if gratitude inspire thy breast,  
 Spurn the soft fetters of lethargic rest.  
 Awake, awake! and snatch the slumbering  
 lyre,  
 Let this bright morn and Sandys the song  
 inspire.' 110

“I look'd obedience: the celestial Fair  
 Smiled like the morn, and vanish'd into  
 air.”

## II.

### SONNET, ON SEEING MISS HELEN MARIA WILLIAMS WEEP AT A TALE OF DISTRESS.

[Composed 1787.—Published March, 1787 (*The European Magazine*, Vol. XI, p. 202); never reprinted by W.]

SHE wept.—Life's purple tide began to  
 flow  
 In languid streams through every thrilling  
 vein;  
 Dim were my swimming eyes—my pulse  
 beat slow,  
 And my full heart was swell'd to dear  
 delicious pain. 4  
 Life left my loaded heart, and closing eye;  
 A sigh recall'd the wanderer to my breast;  
 Dear was the pause of life, and dear the  
 sigh  
 That call'd the wanderer home, and home  
 to rest.  
 That tear proclaims—in thee each virtue  
 dwells,  
 And bright will shine in misery's midnight  
 hour; 10  
 As the soft star of dewy evening tells

What radiant fires were drown'd by day's  
malignant pow'r,  
That only wait the darkness of the night  
To cheer the wand'ring wretch with hospi-  
table light.

## AXIOLOGUS.

## III.

## THE BIRTH OF LOVE.

[Composed 1795 (?).—Published 1795.]

Reprinted from a vol. entitled *Poems by Francis  
Wrangham, M.A.* A translation (signed  
Wordsworth) of some French stanzas signed  
Anon.; never reprinted by Wordsworth—Ed.

WHEN Love was born of heavenly line,  
What dire intrigues disturbed *Cythera's*  
joy!

Till VENUS cried, "A mother's heart is  
mine;

None but myself shall nurse my boy."

But, infant as he was, the child 5

In that divine embrace enchanted lay;

And, by the beauty of the vase begu'd,  
Forgot the beverage—and pin'd away.

"And must my offspring languish in my  
sight?"

(Alive to all a mother's pain, 10

The Queen of Beauty thus her court ad-  
dress'd)

"No: Let the most discreet of all my  
train

Receive him to her breast:

Think all, he is the God of young  
delight." 14

Then TENDERNESS with CANDOUR join'd,  
And GAIETY the charming office sought;

Nor even DELICACY stayed behind:

But none of those fair Graces brought  
Wherewith to nurse the child—and still he  
pin'd.

Some fond hearts to COMPLIANCE seem'd  
inclin'd; 20

But she had surely spoil'd the boy:

And sad experience forbade a thought  
On the wild Goddess of VOLUPTUOUS  
JOY.

Long undecided lay th' important choice,  
Till of the beauteous court, at length, a  
voice 25

Pronounced the name of HOPE:—The  
conscious child

Stretched forth his little arms and smil'd.

'Tis said ENJOYMENT (who averr'd

The charge belong'd to her alone)

Jealous that HOPE had been preferr'd 30  
Laid snares to make the babe her own.

Of INNOCENCE the garb she took,  
The blushing mien and downcast look;  
And came her services to proffer:  
And HOPE (what has not HOPE believ'd!)  
By that seducing air deceiv'd, 36  
Accepted of the offer.

It happen'd that, to sleep inclin'd,  
Deluded HOPE for one short hour  
To that false INNOCENCE's power 40  
Her little charge consign'd.

The Goddess then her lap with sweetmeats  
fill'd

And gave, in handfuls gave, the treach-  
erous store:

A wild delirium first the infant thrill'd;  
But soon upon her breast he sunk—to  
wake no more. 45

## IV.

## THE CONVICT.

[Composed ?.—Published 1798; never reprinted  
by W.]

THE glory of evening was spread through  
the west;

—On the slope of a mountain I stood,

While the joy that precedes the calm season  
of rest

Rang loud through the meadow and  
wood.

"And must we then part from a dwelling  
so fair?" 5

In the pain of my spirit I said,

And with a deep sadness I turned, to  
repair

To the cell where the convict is laid.

The thick-ribbed walls that o'ershadow the  
gate

Resound; and the dungeons unfold: 10  
I pause; and at length, through the glim-  
mering grate,

That outcast of pity behold.

His black matted hair on his shoulder is  
bent,

And deep is the sigh of his breath,  
And with steadfast dejection his eyes are  
intent 15

On the fetters that link him to death.

'Tis sorrow enough on that visage to gaze,  
That body dismiss'd from his care;

Yet my fancy has pierced to his heart, and  
pourtrays

More terrible images there. 20

His bones are consumed, and his life-blood  
is dried,  
With wishes the past to undo;  
And his crime, through the pains that o'er-  
whelm him, desried,  
Still blackens and grows on his view.

When from the dark synod, or blood-  
reeking field, 25  
To his chamber the monarch is led,  
All soother's of sense their soft virtue shall  
yield,  
And quietness pillow his head.

But if grief, self-consumed, in oblivion  
would doze,  
And conscience her tortures appease, 30  
Mid tumult and uproar this man must  
repose;  
In the comfortless vault of disease.

When his fetters at night have so press'd  
on his limbs,  
That the weight can no longer be borne,  
If, while a half-slumber his memory be-  
dimes, 35  
The wretch on his pallet should turn,

While the jail-mastiff howls at the dull  
clanking chain,  
From the roots of his hair there shall  
start  
A thousand sharp punctures of cold-  
sweating pain,  
And terror shall leap at his heart. 40

But now he half-raises his deep-sunken  
eye,  
And the motion unsettles a tear;  
The silence of sorrow it seems to supply,  
And asks of me why I am here.

"Poor victim! no idle intruder has stood  
With o'erweening complacence our state  
to compare, 45  
But one, whose first wish is the wish to be  
good,  
Is come as a brother thy sorrows to  
share.

"At thy name though compassion her  
nature resign,  
Though in virtue's proud mouth thy  
report be a stain, 50  
My care, if the arm of the mighty were  
mine,  
Would plant thee where yet thou  
might'st blossom again."

## V.

## ANDREW JONES.

[Composed probably 1800.—Published 1800, 1802,  
1805 (*Lyrical Ballads*); ed. 1815; omitted from  
edd. 1820—1849-50.]

I HATE that Andrew Jones: he'll breed  
His children up to waste and pillage.  
I wish the press-gang or the drum  
Would, with its rattling music, come,  
And sweep him from the village! 5

I said not this, because he loves  
Through the long day to swear and tittle;  
But for the poor dear sake of one  
To whom a foul deed he had done,  
A friendless Man, a travelling Cripple! 10

For this poor crawling helpless wretch  
Some Horseman who was passing by,  
A penny on the ground had thrown;  
But the poor Cripple was alone  
And could not stoop—no help was nigh.

Inch-thick the dust lay on the ground 16  
For it had long been drouthy weather;  
So with his staff the Cripple wrought  
Among the dust till he had brought  
The halfpennies together. 20

It chanc'd that Andrew pass'd that way  
Just at the time; and there he found  
The Cripple in the mid-day heat  
Standing alone, and at his feet  
He saw the penny on the ground. 25

He stooped and took the penny up:  
And when the Cripple nearer drew,  
Quoth Andrew, "Under half-a-crown,  
What a man finds is all his own,  
And so, my Friend, good-day to you." 30

And hence I say, that Andrew's boys  
Will all be train'd to waste and pillage;  
And wish'd the press-gang, or the drum  
Would, with its rattling music, come,  
And sweep him from the village! 35

## VI.

"ON NATURE'S INVITATION DO  
I COME."

[Composed probably in 1800.—Published 1851.]

ON Nature's invitation do I come,  
By Reason sanctioned. Can the choice  
mislead,  
That made the calmest, fairest spot on  
earth,  
With all its unappropriated good,  
My own; and not mine only, for with me

Entrenched—say rather peacefully em-  
bowed—<sup>6</sup>  
Under yon orchard, in yon humble cot,  
A younger orphan of a Home extinct,  
The only daughter of my parents dwells:  
Aye, think on that, my heart, and cease to  
stir;<sup>10</sup>  
Pause upon that, and let the breathing  
frame  
No longer breathe, but all be satisfied.  
Oh, if such silence be not thanks to God  
For what hath been bestowed, then where,  
where then  
Shall gratitude find rest? Mine eyes did  
ne'er<sup>15</sup>  
Fix on a lovely object, nor my mind  
Take pleasure in the midst of happy  
thoughts,  
But either she, whom now I have, who now  
Divides with me this loved abode, was  
there,  
Or not far off. Where'er my footsteps  
turned,<sup>20</sup>  
Her voice was like a hidden Bird that sang;  
The thought of her was like a flash of light  
Or an unseen companionship, a breath  
Or fragrance independent of the wind.  
In all my goings, in the new and old<sup>25</sup>  
Of all my meditations, and in this  
Favourite of all, in this the most of all. . .  
Embrace me then, ye hills, and close me in.  
Now in the clear and open day I feel<sup>29</sup>  
Your guardianship: I take it to my heart;  
'Tis like the solemn shelter of the night.  
But I would call thee beautiful; for mild,  
And soft, and gay, and beautiful thou art,  
Dear valley, having in thy face a smile,  
Though peaceful, full of gladness. Thou  
art pleased,<sup>35</sup>  
Pleased with thy crags, and woody steepes,  
thy Lake,  
Its one green Island, and its winding shores,  
The multitude of little rocky hills,  
Thy Church, and cottages of mountain-  
stone  
Clustered like stars some few, but single<sup>40</sup>  
most,  
And lurking dimly in their shy retreats,  
Or glancing at each other cheerful looks,  
Like separated stars with clouds between.

VII<sup>1</sup>.

**"BLEAK SEASON WAS IT, TURBU-  
LENT AND WILD."**

[Composed (possibly) in 1800.—Published 1851.]

BLEAK season was it, turbulent and wild,  
When hitherward we journeyed, side by  
side,

Nos. VI and VII. are extracts, given by Bishop

Through bursts of sunshine and through  
flying showers,  
Paced the long Vales, how long they were,  
and yet  
How fast that length of way was left  
behind,<sup>5</sup>  
Wensley's rich Vale and Sedbergh's naked  
heights.  
The frosty wind, as if to make amends  
For its keen breath, was aiding to our  
steps,  
And drove us onward as two ships at sea;  
Or, like two birds, companions in mid-air,  
Parted and reunited by the blast.<sup>11</sup>  
Stern was the face of nature; we rejoiced  
In that stern countenance; for our souls  
thence drew  
A feeling of their strength. The naked  
trees,  
The icy brooks, as on we passed, appeared  
To question us, "Whence come ye? To  
what end?"<sup>16</sup>

## VIII.

**AMONG ALL LOVELY THINGS MY  
LOVE HAD BEEN.**

[Composed April 12, 1802.—Published 1807;  
never reprinted by W.]

AMONG all lovely things my Love had  
been;  
Had noted well the stars, all flowers that  
grew  
About her home; but she had never seen  
A Glow-worm, never one, and this I knew.  
While riding near her home one stormy  
night<sup>5</sup>  
A single Glow-worm did I chance to spy;  
I gave a fervent welcome to the sight,  
And from my Horse I leapt; great joy  
had I.  
Upon a leaf the Glow-worm did I lay,  
To bear it with me through the stormy  
night;<sup>10</sup>  
And, as before, it shone without dismay;  
Albeit putting forth a fainter light.  
When to the Dwelling of my Love I came,  
I went into the Orchard quietly;  
And left the Glow-worm, blessing it by  
name,<sup>15</sup>  
Laid safely by itself, beneath a Tree.

Wordsworth in his *Memoirs* of the poet (1851),  
from *The Recluse, Book I., Part I., Home at  
Grasmere*;—a poem which, being copyright, is  
not included in this volume. For two other  
extracts from the same poem see *Water-Fowl*,  
page 218, and the *Preface to The Excursion*.—  
Ed.

The whole next day, I hoped, and hoped  
with fear;  
At night the Glow-worm shone beneath  
the Tree:  
I led my Lucy to the spot, "Look here!"  
Oh! joy it was for her, and joy for me!<sup>1</sup>

## IX.

SONNET<sup>2</sup>.

[Composed ?.—Published October 10, 1803 (*Morning Post*); never reprinted by W.]

I FIND it written of Simonides  
That travelling in strange countries  
once he found  
A corpse that lay expos'd upon the  
ground,  
For which, with pains, he caused due  
obsequies  
To be performed, and paid all holy fees. 5  
Soon after, this man's Ghost unto him  
came  
And told him not to sail as was his aim,  
On board a ship then ready for the seas.  
Simonides, admonished by the ghost,  
Remained behind; the ship the following  
day 10  
Set sail, was wrecked, and all on board  
were lost.  
Thus was the tenderest Poet that could be,  
Who sang in ancient Greece his moving  
lay,  
Sared out of many by his piety.

## X.

GEORGE AND SARAH GREEN<sup>3</sup>.

[Composed 1808.—Published September, 1839  
(*Tail's Edinburgh Magazine*); never printed  
by W.]

Who weeps for strangers? Many wept  
For George and Sarah Green;  
Wept for that pair's unhappy fate,  
Whose grave may here be seen.

<sup>1</sup> The incident described in this poem took place in 1795—probably at Racedown—between the poet and his sister Dorothy.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> This sonnet bears no signature in the *Morning Post*, but Coleridge, in an unpublished letter, assigns it to Wordsworth. Cf. line 12 with line 58 of the Poem, No. II., on September, 1819 (*Poems of Sentiment*, XXVIII., p. 498), and with a passage in the *Essay on Epitaphs* (page 229) in which the story of this sonnet is related in prose.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup> See De Quincey's *Early Memorials of Grassmere*.—Ed.

By night, upon these stormy fells, 5  
Did wife and husband roam;  
Six little ones at home had left,  
And could not find that home.

For any dwelling-place of man 10  
As vainly did they seek.  
He perish'd; and a voice was heard—  
The widow's lonely shriek.

Not many steps, and she was left  
A body without life—  
A few short steps were the chain that 15  
bound  
The husband to the wife.

Now do those sternly-featured hills  
Look gently on this grave;  
And quiet now are the depths of air, 20  
As a sea without a wave.

But deeper lies the heart of peace  
In quiet more profound;  
The heart of quietness is here  
Within this churchyard bound.

And from all agony of mind 25  
It keeps them safe, and far  
From fear and grief, and from all need  
Of sun or guiding star.

O darkness of the grave! how deep,  
After that living night— 30  
That last and dreary living one  
Of sorrow and affright?

O sacred marriage-bed of death,  
That keeps them side by side  
In bond of peace, in bond of love, 35  
That may not be untied!

## XI.

TRANSLATION OF PART OF THE  
FIRST BOOK OF THE ÆNEID.

[Written c. 1816.—Published 1832 (*The Philological Museum*); not reprinted by W.]

TO THE EDITORS OF THE "PHILOLOGICAL  
MUSEUM."

Your letter, reminding me of an expectation I some time since held out to you of allowing some specimens of my translation from the Æneid to be printed in the "Philological Museum," was not very acceptable; for I had abandoned the thought of ever sending into the world any part of that experiment—for it was nothing more—an experiment begun for amusement, and I now think a less fortunate one than when I first named it to you. Having been displeased in modern translations with the additions of incongruous matter, I began to translate with a resolve to keep clear of that fault, by adding nothing; but I became con-

vinced that a spirited translation can scarcely be accomplished in the English language without admitting a principle of compensation. On this point, however, I do not wish to insist, and merely send the following passage, taken at random, from a wish to comply with your request.—W. W.

BUT Cytherea, studious to invent  
Arts yet untried, upon new counsels bent,  
Resolves that Cupid, chang'd in form and face  
To young Ascanius, should assume his place;  
Present the maddening gifts, and kindle heat  
Of passion at the bosom's inmost seat.  
She dreads the treacherous house, the double tongue;  
She burns, she frets—by Juno's rancour stung;  
The calm of night is powerless to remove  
These cares, and thus she speaks to winged Love:

"O son, my strength, my power! who dost despise  
(What, save thyself, none dares through earth and skies)

The giant-quelling bolts of Jove, I flee,  
O son, a suppliant to thy deity!  
What perils meet Æneas in his course,  
How Juno's hate with unrelenting force  
Pursues thy brother—this to thee is known;

And oft-times hast thou made my griefs thine own.

Him now the generous Dido by soft chains  
Of bland entreaty at her court detains;  
Junoian hospitalities prepare

Such apt occasion that I dread a snare.  
Hence, ere some hostile God can intervene,  
Would I, by previous wiles, inflame the queen

With passion for Æneas, such strong love  
That at my beck, mine only, she shall move.

Hear, and assist;—the father's mandate calls

His young Ascanius to the Tyrian walls;  
He comes, my dear delight,—and costliest things

Preserv'd from fire and flood for presents brings.

Him will I take, and in close covert keep,  
Mid groves Idalian, lull'd to gentle sleep,  
Or on Cythera's far-sequestered steep,  
That he may neither know what hope is mine,

Nor by his presence traverse the design.  
Do thou, but for a single night's brief space,

Dissemble; be that boy in form and face!

And when enraptured Dido shall receive  
Thee to her arms, and kisses interweave  
With many a fond embrace, while joy runs high,  
And goblets crown the proud festivity,  
Instil thy subtle poison, and inspire,  
At every touch, an unsuspected fire."

Love, at the word, before his mother's sight

Puts off his wings, and walks, with proud delight,

Like young Iulus; but the gentlest dews  
Of slumber Venus sheds, to circumsure  
The true Ascanius steep'd in placid rest;  
Then wafts him, cherish'd on her careful breast,

Through upper air to an Idalian glade,  
Where he on soft *amaracus* is laid,  
With breathing flowers embraced, and fragrant shade.

But Cupid, following cheerily his guide  
Achates, with the gifts to Carthage hied;  
And, as the hall he enter'd, there, between  
The sharers of her golden couch, was seen  
Reclin'd in festal pomp the Tyrian queen.  
The Trojans too (Æneas at their head),  
On couches lie, with purple overspread:  
Meantime in canisters is heap'd the bread,  
Pellucid water for the hands is borne,  
And napkins of smooth texture, finely shorn.

Within are fifty handmaids, who prepare,  
As they in order stand, the dainty fare;  
And fume the household deities with store  
Of odorous incense; while a hundred more  
Match'd with an equal number of like age,  
But each of manly sex, a docile page,  
Marshal the banquet, giving with due grace  
To cup or viand its appointed place.  
The Tyrians rushing in, an eager band,  
Their painted couches seek, obedient to command.

They look with wonder on the gifts—they gaze

Upon Iulus, dazzled with the rays  
That from his ardent countenance are flung,

And charm'd to hear his simulating tongue;  
Nor pass unprais'd the robe and veil divine,  
Round which the yellow flowers and wandering foliage twine.

But chiefly Dido, to the coming ill  
Devoted, strives in vain her vast desires to fill;

She views the gifts; upon the child then turns

Insatiable looks, and gazing burns.  
To ease a father's cheated love he hung  
Upon Æneas, and around him clung;

Then seeks the queen; with her his arts he  
tries; 85  
She fastens on the boy enamour'd eyes,  
Clasps in her arms, nor weens (O lot  
unblest!)

How great a God, incumbent o'er her breast,  
Would fill it with his spirit. He, to please  
His Acidalian mother, by degrees 90  
Blots out Sicheus, studious to remove  
The dead, by influx of a living love,  
By stealthy entrance of a perilous guest,  
Troubling a heart that had been long at rest.

Now when the viands were withdrawn,  
and ceas'd 95  
The first division of the splendid feast,  
While round a vacant board the chiefs  
recline,  
Huge goblets are brought forth; they  
crown the wine;  
Voices of gladness roll the walls around;  
Those gladsome voices from the courts  
rebound; 100  
From gilded rafters many a blazing light  
Depends, and torches overcome the night.  
The minutes fly—till, at the queen's com-  
mand,  
A bowl of state is offered to her hand:  
Then she, as Belus wont, and all the line  
From Belus, filled it to the brim with  
wine; 106  
Silence ensued. "O Jupiter, whose care  
Is hospitable dealing, grant my prayer!  
Productive day be this of lasting joy  
To Tyrians, and these exiles driven from  
Troy; 110  
A day to future generations dear!  
Let Bacchus, donor of soul-quick'ning  
cheer,

Be present; kindly Juno, be thou near!  
And, Tyrians, may your choicest favours  
wait  
Upon this hour, the bond to celebrate!"  
She spake and shed an offering on the  
board; 116  
Then sipp'd the bowl whence she the wine  
had pour'd  
And gave to Bias, urging the prompt lord;  
He rais'd the bowl, and took a long deep  
draught;  
Then every chief in turn the beverage  
quaff'd. 120

Graced with redundant hair, Iopas sings  
The lore of Atlas, to resounding strings,  
The labours of the Sun, the lunar wander-  
ings;  
Whence human kind, and brute; what  
natural powers  
Engender lightning, whence are falling  
showers. 125

He chaunts Arcturus,—that fraternal  
twain  
The glittering Bears,—the Pleiads fraught  
with rain;  
—Why suns in winter, shunning heaven's  
steep heights  
Post seaward,—what impedes the tardy  
night.  
The learned song from Tyrian hearers  
draws 130  
Loud shouts,—the Trojans echo the ap-  
plause.  
—But, lengthening out the night with  
converse new,  
Large draughts of love unhappy Dido  
draw;  
Of Priam ask'd, of Hector,—o'er and  
o'er—  
What arms the son of bright Aurora  
wore;— 135  
What steeds the car of Diomed could  
boast;  
Among the leaders of the Grecian host  
How looked Achilles—their dread para-  
mount—  
"But nay—the fatal wiles, O guest,  
recount,  
Retrace the Grecian cunning from its  
source, 140  
Your own grief and your friends'—your  
wandering course;  
For now, till this seventh summer have  
ye rang'd  
The sea, or trod the earth, to peace  
estrang'd."

## XII.

## SONNET.

AUTHOR'S VOYAGE DOWN THE RHINE  
(THIRTY YEARS AGO).

[Composed probably 1821.—Published 1822 (*Mem-  
oirs of a Tour on the Continent*, 1820);  
never reprinted by W.]

THE confidence of Youth our only Art,  
And Hope gay Pilot of the bold design,  
We saw the living Landscapes of the  
Rhine,  
Reach after reach, salute us and depart;  
Slow sink the Spires,—and up again they  
start! 5  
But who shall count the Towers as they  
recline  
O'er the dark steepes, or on the horizon  
line  
Striding, with shattered crests, the eye  
athwart?

More touching still, more perfect was the  
 pleasure,  
 When hurrying forward till the slack'ning  
 stream<sup>10</sup>  
 Spread like a spacious Mere, we there  
 could measure  
 A smooth free course along the watery  
 gleam,  
 Think calmly on the past, and mark at  
 leisure  
 Features which else had vanished like  
 a dream.

## XIII.

## A CENTO MADE BY WORDSWORTH.

[Published 1835 (*Farrow Revisited and other Poems*); never reprinted by W.]

For printing [the following piece] some reason  
 should be given, as not a word of it is original:  
 it is simply a fine stanza of Akenside, connected  
 with a still finer from Beattie, by a couplet  
 from Thomson. This practice, in which the  
 author sometimes indulges, of linking together,  
 in his own mind, favourite passages from different  
 authors, seems in itself unobjectionable;  
 but, as the *publishing* such compilations might  
 lead to confusion in literature, he should deem  
 himself inexcusable in giving this specimen,  
 were it not from a hope that it might open to  
 others a harmless source of *private* gratification.—W. W.

THRONED in the Sun's descending car  
 What Power unseen diffuses far  
 This tenderness of mind?  
 What Genius smiles on yonder flood?  
 What God in whispers from the wood  
 Bids every thought be kind?

O ever pleasing Solitude,  
 Companion of the wise and good,  
 Thy shades, thy silence, now be mine,  
 Thy charms my only theme;  
 My haunt the hollow cliff whose Pine<sup>10</sup>  
 Waves o'er the gloomy stream;  
 Whence the scared Owl on pinions grey  
 Breaks from the rustling boughs,  
 And down the lone vale sails away<sup>15</sup>  
 To more profound repose!

## XIV.

## INSCRIPTION ON A ROCK AT RYDAL MOUNT. (1838.)

WOULDST thou be gathered to Christ's  
 chosen flock,  
 Shun the broad way too easily explored,  
 And let thy path be hewn out of the Rock,  
 The living Rock of God's eternal Word.

## XV.

PROTEST AGAINST THE BALLOT.  
(1838.)

[Composed 1838.—Published 1838 (collected vol. of *Sonnets*); 1839 (Supplement to ed. 1842); afterwards omitted by W.]

FORTH rushed from Envy sprung and  
 Self-conceit,  
 A Power misnamed the SPIRIT of RE-  
 FORM,  
 And through the astonished Island swept  
 in storm,  
 Threatening to lay all Orders at her feet  
 That crossed her way. Now stoops she to  
 entreat<sup>5</sup>  
 Licence to hide at intervals her head  
 Where she may work, safe, undisquieted,  
 In a close Box, covert for Justice meet.  
 St. George of England! keep a watchful  
 eye  
 Fixed on the Suitor; frustrate her re-  
 quest—<sup>10</sup>  
 Stifle her hope; for, if the State comply,  
 From such Pandorian gift may come a  
 Pest  
 Worse than the Dragon that bowed low  
 his crest,  
 Pierced by thy spear in glorious victory.

## XVI.

## A POET TO HIS GRANDCHILD.

SEQUEL TO "A PLEA FOR AUTHORS<sup>1</sup>."

[Composed 1838.—Same dates and mode of publication as XV.; omitted from edd. 1843—1849—50.]

"SON of my buried Son, while thus thy  
 hand  
 Is clasping mine, it saddens me to think  
 How Want may press thee down, and with  
 thee sink  
 Thy Children left unfit, through vain de-  
 mand  
 Of culture, even to feel or understand<sup>5</sup>  
 My simplest Lay that to their memory  
 May cling;—hard fate! which haply need  
 not be  
 Did Justice mould the Statutes of the  
 Land.  
 A Book time-cherished and an honoured  
 name  
 Are high rewards; but bound they Nature's  
 claim<sup>10</sup>  
 Or Reason's? No—hopes spun in timid  
 line

<sup>1</sup> See page 280.—Ed.

From out the bosom of a modest home  
 Extend through unambitious years to come,  
 My careless Little-one, for thee and thine!"

May 23, 1838.

# XVII.

ON A PORTRAIT OF I. F. [ISABELLA  
 FENWICK], PAINTED BY MARGA-  
 RET GILLIES'.

We gaze—nor grieve to think that we  
 must die,  
 But that the precious love this friend hath  
 sown

Within our hearts, the love whose flower  
 hath blown

Bright as if heaven were ever in its eye,  
 Will pass so soon from human memory: 5  
 And not by strangers to our blood alone,  
 But by our best descendants be unknown,  
 Unthought of—this may surely claim a  
 sigh.

Yet, blessed Art, we yield not to dejection;  
 Thou against Time so feelingly dost strive.  
 Where'er, preserved in this most true  
 reflection, 11

An image of her soul is kept alive,  
 Some lingering fragrance of the pure  
 affection,

Whose flower with us will vanish, must  
 survive.

RYDAL MOUNT, *New Year's Day*, 1840.

# XVIII.

TO I. F.

THE star which comes at close of day to  
 shine

More heavenly bright than when it leads  
 the morn,

Is Friendship's emblem, whether the for-  
 lorn

She visiteth, or, shedding light benign  
 Through shades that solemnize Life's calm  
 decline, 5

Doth make the happy happier. This have  
 we

Learnt, Isabel, from thy society,  
 Which now we too unwillingly resign

Though for brief absence. But farewell!  
 the page

Glimmers before my sight through thank-  
 ful tears, 10

Such as start forth, not seldom, to approve  
 Our truth, when we, old yet unchilled by age,

Call thee, though known but for a few  
 fleet years,  
 The heart-affanced sister of our love!

RYDAL MOUNT, *Feb.* 1840.

# XIX.

"WHEN SEVERN'S SWEEPING FLOOD  
 HAD OVERTHROWN."

In 1842 a bazaar was held in Cardiff Castle to  
 raise funds for the building of a Church. Words-  
 worth assisted by contributing this Sonnet, which  
 was printed and sold along with verses by James  
 Montgomery and others (cf. Prof. Knight's note,  
 in his edition of the *Poems*, Vol. VIII.)—Ed.

WHEN Severn's sweeping flood had over-  
 thrown

St. Mary's Church, the preacher then  
 would cry:—

"Thus, Christian people, God his might  
 hath shown

That ye to him your love may testify;  
 Haste, and rebuild the pile."—But not  
 a stone

Resumed its place. Age after age went by,  
 And Heaven still lacked its due, though  
 piety

In secret did, we trust, her loss bemoan.  
 But now her Spirit hath put forth its  
 claim 9

In Power, and Poesy would lend her voice;  
 Let the new Church be worthy of its aim,  
 That in its beauty Cardiff may rejoice!

Oh! in the past if cause there was for  
 shame,

Let not our times halt in their better  
 choice.

RYDAL MOUNT, *Jan.* 23, 1842.

# XX.

THE EAGLE AND THE DOVE.

[Composed 1842 (?).—Published 1842 (*La Petite  
 Chouannerie ou Histoire d'un Collège Breton  
 sous l'Empire*. By A. F. Rio).]

SHADE of Caractacus, if spirits love  
 The cause they fought for in their earthly  
 home,

To see the Eagle ruffled by the Dove  
 May soothe thy memory of the chains of  
 Rome.

These children claim thee for their sire;  
 the breath 5

Of thy renown, from Cambrian mountains,  
 fairs

A flame within them that despises death  
 And glorifies the truant youth of Vannes.

<sup>1</sup> XVII. and XVIII. were first published (1851)  
 in the *Memoirs of William Wordsworth*, by his  
 nephew, the late Bishop of Lincoln.—Ed.

With thy own scorn of tyrants they  
advance,  
But truth divine has sanctified their rage,  
A silver cross enchased with Flowers of  
France  
Their badge, attests the holy fight they  
wage.

The shrill defiance of the young crusade  
Their veteran foes mock as an idle noise;  
But unto Faith and Loyalty comes aid<sup>15</sup>  
From Heaven, gigantic force to beardless  
boys.

## XXI.

## LINES

INSCRIBED IN A COPY OF HIS POEMS  
SENT TO THE QUEEN FOR THE ROYAL  
LIBRARY AT WINDSOR.

DEIGN, Sovereign Mistress! to accept a  
lay,  
No Laureate offering of elaborate art;  
But salutation taking its glad way  
From deep recesses of a loyal heart.

Queen, Wife and Mother! may All-judging  
Heaven<sup>5</sup>  
Shower with a bounteous hand on Thee  
and Thine  
Felicity that only can be given  
On earth to goodness blest by grace  
divine.

Lady! devoutly honoured and beloved  
Through every realm confided to thy  
sway;<sup>10</sup>  
May'st thou pursue thy course by God  
approved,  
And He will teach thy people to obey.

As thou art wont, thy sovereignty adorn  
With woman's gentleness, yet firm and  
staid;  
So shall that earthly crown thy brows have  
worn<sup>15</sup>  
Be changed for one whose glory cannot  
fade.

And now by duty urged, I lay this Book  
Before thy Majesty, in humble trust  
That on its simplest pages thou wilt look  
With a benign indulgence more than  
just.<sup>20</sup>

Nor wilt thou blame an aged Poet's prayer,  
That issuing hence may steal into thy  
mind

Some solace under weight of royal care,  
Or grief—the inheritance of humankind.

For know we not that from celestial  
spheres,<sup>25</sup>  
When Time was young, an inspiration  
came  
(Oh were it mine!) to hallow saddest tears,  
And help life onward in its noblest aim.  
W. W.

January 9th, 1846.

## XXII.

ODE ON THE INSTALLATION OF HIS  
ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE ALBERT  
AS CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVER-  
SITY OF CAMBRIDGE, JULY, 1847<sup>1</sup>.

[Composed 1847.—Published 1847.]

FOR thirst of power that Heaven dis-  
owns,  
For temples, towers, and thrones  
Too long insulted by the Spoiler's shock,  
Indignant Europe cast  
Her stormy foe at last<sup>5</sup>  
To reap the whirlwind on a Libyan rock.  
War is passion's basest game  
Madly played to win a name:  
Up starts some tyrant, Earth and Heaven  
to dare,  
The servile million bow;<sup>10</sup>  
But will the Lightning glance aside to  
spare  
The Despot's laurelled brow?

War is mercy, glory, fame,  
Waged in Freedom's holy cause,  
Freedom, such as man may claim<sup>15</sup>  
Under God's restraining laws.  
Such is Albion's fame and glory,  
Let rescued Europe tell the story.  
But lo! what sudden cloud has darkened  
all  
The land as with a funeral pall?<sup>20</sup>  
The Rose of England suffers blight,  
The Flower has drooped, the Isle's delight:  
Flower and bud together fall;  
A Nation's hopes lie crushed in Claremont's  
desolate Hall.

Time a chequered mantle wears—<sup>25</sup>  
Earth awakes from wintry sleep:  
Again the Tree a blossom bears;  
Cease, Britannia, cease to weep!  
Hark to the peals on this bright May-  
morn!  
They tell that your future Queen is born.  
A Guardian Angel fluttered<sup>31</sup>  
Above the babe, unseen;

<sup>1</sup> The poet's nephew Christopher (late Bishop of Lincoln) aided in the composition of this "commanded" Ode.—Ed.

One word he softly uttered,  
It named the future Queen; 34  
And a joyful cry through the Island rang,  
As clear and bold as the trumpet's clang,  
As bland as the reed of peace :—  
"VICTORIA be her name!"  
For righteous triumphs are the base  
Whereon Britannia rests her peaceful  
fame. 40

Time, in his mantle's sunniest fold  
Uplifted in his arms the child,  
And while the fearless infant smiled,  
Her happier destiny foretold :—  
"Infancy, by Wisdom mild, 45  
Trained to health and artless beauty;  
Youth, by pleasure unbeguiled  
From the lore of lofty duty;  
Womanhood in pure renown,  
Seated on her lineal throne; 50  
Leaves of myrtle in her Crown,  
Fresh with lustre all their own.  
Love, the treasure worth possessing  
More than all the world beside,  
This shall be her choicest blessing, 55  
Oft to royal hearts denied."

That eve, the Star of Brunswick shone  
With steadfast ray benign  
On Gotha's ducal roof, and on  
The softly flowing Leine, 60  
Nor failed to gild the spires of Bonn,  
And glittered on the Rhine.  
Old Camus, too, on that prophetic night  
Was conscious of the ray;  
And his willows whispered in its light, 65  
Not to the Zephyr's sway,  
But with a Delphic life, in sight  
Of this auspicious day—  
This day, when Granta hails her chosen  
Lord, 70  
And, proud of her award,  
Confiding in that Star serene,  
Welcomes the Consort of a happy Queen.

Prince, in these collegiate bowers,  
Where science, leagued with holier truth,  
Guards the sacred heart of youth, 75  
Solemn monitors are ours.  
These reverend aisles, these hallowed  
towers,  
Raised by many a hand august,  
Are haunted by majestic Powers,  
The Memories of the Wise and Just, 80  
Who, faithful to a pious trust,  
Here, in the Founder's Spirit sought  
To mould and stamp the ore of thought  
In that bold form and impress high  
That best betoken patriot loyalty. 85  
Not in vain those Sages taught,—  
True disciples, good as great,

Have pondered here their country's weal,  
Weighed the Future by the Past,  
Learned how social frames may last, 90  
And how a Land may rule its fate  
By constancy inviolate,  
Though worlds to their foundations reel  
The sport of factious Hate or godless Zeal.

Albert, in thy race we cherish 95  
A Nation's strength that will not perish  
While England's sceptred Line  
True to the King of Kings is found;  
Like that Wise ancestor of thine  
Who threw the Saxon shield o'er Luther's  
life 100  
When first, above the yells of bigot strife,  
The trumpet of the Living Word  
Assumed a voice of deep portentous sound,  
From gladdened Elbe to startled Tiber  
heard. 105  
What shield more sublime  
E'er was blazoned or sung?  
And the PRINCE whom we greet  
From its Hero is sprung.  
Resound, resound the strain 110  
That hails him for our own!  
Again, again, and yet again,  
For the Church, the State, the Throne!  
And that Presence fair and bright,  
Ever blest wherever seen,  
Who deigns to grace our festal rite, 115  
The Pride of the Islands, VICTORIA  
THE QUEEN!

## XXIII.

## QUINZAIN

CONJECTURALLY ASSIGNED TO WORDS-  
WORTH.

[Composed ?.—Published 1802 (*Morning Post*);  
never reprinted by W.]

A writer (E. H. C.) in the *Athenæum* of November 4, 1893, suggests that the following lines, which appeared in the *Morning Post* on February 9, 1802, were probably composed by Wordsworth. "It may be remembered," writes E. H. C., "that the phrase 'monthly grave' is to be found in *Lines to the Moon* (1835); and in one of Wordsworth's latest sonnets, that *To Lucca Giordano*, the aged poet turns with pleasure to the delightful vision of 'young Endymion, couched on Latmos Hill.'" The suggestion is undoubtedly a happy one. The rhyme-arrangement of these lines resembles that of the piece beginning, *With how sad steps, O Moon, thou climb'st the Sky*, which first appeared in *Poems in Two Volumes* (1807), but may have been written in or about 1802. Both pieces appear to be experiments in metre. They are neither sonnets nor quinzains, but quinzains, or stanzas consisting of fifteen lines each; though that published in 1807 was subsequently curtailed

by one line and placed amongst the *Miscellaneous Sonnets* (1515 onwards). Moreover, the turn of the sentence in lines 8 and 9—the repetition of the substantive (*Nymphs*) in apposition, qualified by an adjective or adjectival phrase—is of frequent occurrence in Wordsworth's poetry. Cf. *Misc. Son.*, Part II, xx., ll. 7, 8:—

“As if to vindicate her beauty's right,  
Her beauty thoughtlessly disparaged.”—Ed.

#### WRITTEN IN A GROTTO.

O Moon! if e'er I joyed when thy soft light  
Danc'd to the murmuring rill on Lo-  
mond's wave,  
Or sighed for thy sweet presence some dark  
night,  
When thou wert hidden in thy monthly  
grave;

If e'er, on wings which active fancy gave,  
I sought thy golden vale with dancing  
flight,  
Then, stretcht at ease in some sequestered  
cave,  
Gaz'd on thy lovely Nymphs with fond  
delight,  
Thy Nymphs with more than earthly  
beauty bright;  
If e'er thy beam, as Smyrna's shepherds  
tell,  
Soft as the gentle kiss of amorous maid  
On the closed eyes of young Endymion fell,  
That he might wake to clasp thee in the  
shade:  
Each night, while I recline within this cell,  
Guide hither, O sweet Moon, the maid I love  
so well.

# The Prelude;

OR,  
Growth of a Poet's Mind;

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL POEM.

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

[BY THE EDITOR OF 1850.]

THE following Poem was commenced in the beginning of the year 1799, and completed in the summer of 1805<sup>1</sup>.

The design and occasion of the work are described by the Author in his Preface to the "Excursion," first published in 1814, where he thus speaks:—

"Several years ago, when the Author retired to his native mountains with the hope of being enabled to construct a literary work that might live, it was a reasonable thing that he should take a review of his own mind, and examine how far Nature and Education had qualified him for such an employment.

"As subsidiary to this preparation, he undertook to record, in verse, the origin and progress of his own powers, as far as he was acquainted with them.

"That work, addressed to a dear friend, most distinguished for his knowledge and genius, and to whom the Author's intellect is deeply indebted, has been long finished; and the result of the investigation which gave rise to it, was a determination to compose a philosophical Poem, containing views of Man, Nature, and Society, and to be entitled the "Recluse;" as having for its principal subject the sensations and opinions of a poet living in retirement.

"The preparatory poem is biographical, and conducts the history of the Author's mind to the point when he was emboldened to hope that his faculties were sufficiently matured for entering upon the arduous labour which he had proposed to himself; and the two works have the same kind of relation to each other, if he may so express himself, as the Ante-chapel has to the body of a Gothic Church. Continuing this allusion, he may be permitted to add, that his minor pieces, which have been long before the public, when they shall be properly arranged, will be found by the attentive reader to have such connection with the main work as may give them claim to be likened to the little cells, oratories, and sepulchral recesses, ordinarily included in those edifices."

Such was the Author's language in the year 1814.

It will thence be seen, that the present Poem was intended to be introductory to the "Recluse," and that the "Recluse," if completed, would have consisted of Three Parts. Of these, the Second Part alone, viz. the "Excursion," was finished, and given to the world by the Author.

The First Book of the First Part of the "Recluse" still [1850] remains in manuscript; but the Third Part was only planned. The materials of which it would have been formed have, however, been incorporated, for the most part, in the Author's other Publications, written subsequently to the "Excursion."

The Friend, to whom the present Poem is addressed, was the late SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE, who was resident in Malta, for the restoration of his health, when the greater part of it was composed.

Mr. Coleridge read a considerable portion of the Poem while he was abroad; and his feelings, on hearing it recited by the Author (after his return to his own country) are recorded in his Verses, addressed to Mr. Wordsworth, which will be found in the "Sibylline Leaves," p. 197, ed. 1817, or "Poetical Works, by S. T. Coleridge," vol. i., p. 206.

RTDAL MOUNT,

July 13th, 1850.

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<sup>1</sup> For further information regarding the dates of composition of the several Books of *The Prelude*, see the *Chronological Table of the Life of Wordsworth*, under the years 1799, 1800, 1804, and 1805.—Ed.

# The Prelude.

## BOOK FIRST.

### INTRODUCTION—CHILDHOOD AND SCHOOL-TIME.

OH THERE is blessing in this gentle breeze,  
A visitant that while it fans my cheek  
Doth seem half-conscious of the joy it  
    brings  
From the green fields, and from yon  
    azure sky.  
Whate'er its mission, the soft breeze can  
    come 5  
To none more grateful than to me; es-  
    caped  
From the vast city, where I long had  
    pined  
A discontented sojourner: now free,  
Free as a bird to settle where I will.  
What dwelling shall receive me? in what  
    vale 10  
Shall be my harbour? underneath what  
    grove  
Shall I take up my home? and what  
    clear stream  
Shall with its murmur lull me into rest?  
The earth is all before me. With a heart  
Joyous, nor scared at its own liberty, 15  
I look about; and should the chosen  
    guide  
Be nothing better than a wandering  
    cloud,  
I cannot miss my way. I breathe again!  
Trances of thought and mountings of the  
    mind  
Come fast upon me: it is shaken off, 20  
That burthen of my own unnatural self,  
The heavy weight of many a weary day  
Not mine, and such as were not made  
    for me.  
Long months of peace (if such bold word  
    accord  
With any promises of human life), 25  
Long months of ease and undisturbed  
    delight

Are mine in prospect; whither shall I  
    turn,  
By road or pathway, or through trackless  
    field,  
Up hill or down, or shall some floating  
    thing 29  
Upon the river point me out my course?  
  
Dear Liberty! Yet what would it avail  
But for a gift that consecrates the joy?  
For I, methought, while the sweet breath  
    of heaven  
Was blowing on my body, felt within  
A correspondent breeze, that gently  
    moved 35  
With quickening virtue, but is now be-  
    come  
A tempest, a redundant energy,  
Vexing its own creation. Thanks to both,  
And their congenial powers, that, while  
    they join  
In breaking up a long-continued frost, 40  
Bring with them vernal promises, the  
    hope  
Of active days urged on by flying hours,—  
Days of sweet leisure, taxed with patient  
    thought  
Abstruse, nor wanting punctual service  
    high, 44  
Matins and vespers of harmonious verse!

Thus far, O Friend! did I, not used to  
    make  
A present joy the matter of a song,  
Pour forth that day my soul in measured  
    strains  
That would not be forgotten, and are  
    here  
Recorded: to the open fields I told 50  
A prophecy: poetic numbers came

Spontaneously to clothe in priestly robe  
 A renovated spirit singled out,  
 Such hope was mine, for holy services.  
 My own voice cheered me, and, far more,  
 the mind's 55  
 Internal echo of the imperfect sound;  
 To both I listened, drawing from them  
 both  
 A cheerful confidence in things to come.

Content and not unwilling now to give  
 A respite to this passion, I paced on 60  
 With brisk and eager steps; and came,  
 at length,  
 To a green shady place, where down I  
 sate  
 Beneath a tree, slackening my thoughts  
 by choice,  
 And settling into gentler happiness.  
 'Twas autumn, and a clear and placid day,  
 With warmth, as much as needed, from a  
 sun 66  
 Two hours declined towards the west;  
 a day  
 With silver clouds, and sunshine on the  
 grass,  
 And in the sheltered and the sheltering  
 grove  
 A perfect stillness. Many were the  
 thoughts 70  
 Encouraged and dismissed, till choice  
 was made  
 Of a known Vale, whither my feet should  
 turn,  
 Nor rest till they had reached the very  
 door  
 Of the one cottage which methought I  
 saw. 74  
 No picture of mere memory ever looked  
 So fair; and while upon the fancied scene  
 I gazed with growing love, a higher  
 power  
 Than Fancy gave assurance of some work  
 Of glory there forthwith to be begun,  
 Perhaps too there performed. Thus long  
 I mused, 80  
 Nor e'er lost sight of what I mused upon,  
 Save when, amid the stately grove of  
 oaks,  
 Now here, now there, an acorn, from its  
 cup

Dislodged, through sere leaves rustled, or  
 at once  
 To the bare earth dropped with a start-  
 ling sound. 85  
 From that soft couch I rose not, till the  
 sun  
 Had almost touched the horizon; casting  
 then  
 A backward glance upon the curling  
 cloud  
 Of city smoke, by distance ruralised;  
 Keen as a Truant or a Fugitive, 90  
 But as a Pilgrim resolute, I took,  
 Even with the chance equipment of that  
 hour,  
 The road that pointed toward the chosen  
 Vale.  
 It was a splendid evening, and my soul  
 Once more made trial of her strength,  
 nor lacked 95  
 Æolian visitations; but the harp  
 Was soon defrauded, and the banded  
 host  
 Of harmony dispersed in straggling  
 sounds,  
 And lastly utter silence! "Be it so;  
 Why think of anything but present  
 good?" 100  
 So, like a home-bound labourer, I pursued  
 My way beneath the mellowing sun, that  
 shed  
 Mild influence; nor left in me one wish  
 Again to bend the Sabbath of that time  
 To a servile yoke. What need of many  
 words? 105  
 A pleasant loitering journey, through  
 three days  
 Continued, brought me to my hermitage.  
 I spare to tell of what ensued, the life  
 In common things—the endless store of  
 things,  
 Rare, or at least so seeming, every day  
 Found all about me in one neighbour-  
 hood— 111  
 The self-congratulation, and, from morn  
 To night, unbroken cheerfulness serene.  
 But speedily an earnest longing rose  
 To brace myself to some determined aim,  
 Reading or thinking; either to lay up  
 New stores, or rescue from decay the old  
 By timely interference: and therewith

Came hopes still higher, that with outward life  
 I might endure some airy phantasies 120  
 That had been floating loose about for years,  
 And to such beings temperately deal forth  
 The many feelings that oppressed my heart.  
 That hope hath been discouraged; welcome light  
 Dawns from the east, but dawns to disappear 125  
 And mock me with a sky that ripens not  
 Into a steady morning: if my mind,  
 Remembering the bold promise of the past,  
 Would gladly grapple with some noble theme,  
 Vain is her wish; where'er she turns she finds 130  
 Impediments from day to day renewed.

And now it would content me to yield up  
 Those lofty hopes awhile, for present gifts  
 Of humbler industry. But, oh, dear Friend!  
 The Poet, gentle creature as he is, 135  
 Hath, like the Lover, his unruly times;  
 His fits when he is neither sick nor well,  
 Though no distress be near him but his own  
 Unmanageable thoughts: his mind, best pleased  
 While she as duteous as the mother dove  
 Sits brooding, lives not always to that end, 141  
 But like the innocent bird, hath goadings on  
 That drive her as in trouble through the groves;  
 With me is now such passion, to be blamed  
 No otherwise than as it lasts too long. 145

When, as becomes a man who would prepare  
 For such an arduous work, I through myself

Make rigorous inquisition, the report  
 Is often cheering; for I neither seem  
 To lack that first great gift, the vital soul, 150  
 Nor general Truths, which are themselves a sort  
 Of Elements and Agents, Under-powers,  
 Subordinate helpers of the living mind:  
 Nor am I naked of external things,  
 Forms, images, nor numerous other aids  
 Of less regard, though won perhaps with toil 156  
 And needful to build up a Poet's praise.  
 Time, place, and manners do I seek, and these  
 Are found in plenteous store, but nowhere such 159  
 As may be singled out with steady choice;  
 No little band of yet remembered names  
 Whom I, in perfect confidence, might hope  
 To summon back from lonesome banishment,  
 And make them dwellers in the hearts of men  
 Now living, or to live in future years. 165  
 Sometimes the ambitious Power of choice, mistaking  
 Proud spring-tide swellings for a regular sea,  
 Will settle on some British theme, some old  
 Romantic tale by Milton left unsung;  
 More often turning to some gentle place  
 Within the groves of Chivalry, I pipe 171  
 To shepherd swains, or seated harp in hand,  
 Amid reposing knights by a river side  
 Or fountain, listen to the grave reports  
 Of dire enchantments faced and overcome 175  
 By the strong mind, and tales of warlike feats,  
 Where spear encountered spear, and sword with sword  
 Fought, as if conscious of the blazonry  
 That the shield bore, so glorious was the strife;  
 Whence inspiration for a song that winds  
 Through ever-changing scenes of votive quest 181

Wrongs to redress, harmonious tribute paid  
 To patient courage and unblemished  
 truth,  
 To firm devotion, zeal unquenchable,  
 And Christian meekness hallowing faith-  
 ful loves. 185  
 Sometimes, more sternly moved, I would  
 relate  
 How vanquished Mithridates northward  
 passed,  
 And, hidden in the cloud of years, became  
 Odin, the Father of a race by whom  
 Perished the Roman Empire: how the  
 friends 190  
 And followers of Sertorius, out of Spain  
 Flying, found shelter in the Fortunate  
 Isles,  
 And left their usages, their arts and laws,  
 To disappear by a slow gradual death,  
 To dwindle and to perish one by one, 195  
 Starved in those narrow bounds: but  
 not the soul  
 Of Liberty, which fifteen hundred years  
 Survived, and, when the European came  
 With skill and power that might not be  
 withstood,  
 Did, like a pestilence, maintain its hold  
 And wasted down by glorious death that  
 race 201  
 Of natural heroes: or I would record  
 How, in tyrannic times, some high-souled  
 man,  
 Unnamed among the chronicles of kings,  
 Suffered in silence for Truth's sake; or  
 tell, 205  
 How that one Frenchman<sup>1</sup>, through con-  
 tinued force  
 Of meditation on the inhuman deeds  
 Of those who conquered first the Indian  
 Isles,  
 Went single in his ministry across  
 The Ocean; not to comfort the op-  
 pressed, 210  
 But, like a thirsty wind, to roam about  
 Withering the Oppressor: how Gustavus  
 sought  
 Help at his need in Dalecarlia's mines:

How Wallace fought for Scotland; left  
 the name  
 Of Wallace to be found, like a wild  
 flower, 215  
 All over his dear Country; left the  
 deeds  
 Of Wallace, like a family of Ghosts,  
 To people the steep rocks and river  
 banks,  
 Her natural sanctuaries, with a local soul  
 Of independence and stern liberty. 220  
 Sometimes it suits me better to invent  
 A tale from my own heart, more near akin  
 To my own passions and habitual thoughts;  
 Some variegated story, in the main  
 Lofty, but the unsubstantial structure  
 melts 225  
 Before the very sun that brightens it,  
 Mist into air dissolving! Then a wish,  
 My last and favourite aspiration, mounts  
 With yearning toward some philosophic  
 song  
 Of Truth that cherishes our daily life; 230  
 With meditations passionate from deep  
 Recesses in man's heart, immortal verse  
 Thoughtfully fitted to the Orphean lyre;  
 But from this awful burthen I full soon  
 Take refuge and beguile myself with  
 trust 235  
 That mellowed years will bring a ripener  
 mind  
 And clearer insight. Thus my days are  
 past  
 In contradiction; with no skill to part  
 Vague longing, haply bred by want of  
 power,  
 From paramount impulse not to be with-  
 stood, 240  
 A timorous capacity from prudence,  
 From circumspection, infinite delay.  
 Humility and modest awe themselves  
 Betray me, serving often for a cloak 244  
 To a more subtle selfishness; that now  
 Locks every function up in blank reserve,  
 Now dupes me, trusting to an anxious eye  
 That with intrusive restlessness beats off  
 Simplicity and self-presented truth.  
 Ah! better far than this, to stray about  
 Voluptuously through fields and rural  
 walks, 251  
 And ask no record of the hours, resigned

<sup>1</sup> Dominique de Gourgues, who in 1567 sailed  
 to Florida to avenge the massacre of the French  
 by the Spaniards.—*Ed.* of 1850.

To vacant musing, unproved neglect  
 Of all things, and deliberate holiday. 254  
 Far better never to have heard the name  
 Of zeal and just ambition, than to live  
 Baffled and plagued by a mind that every  
 hour  
 Turns recreant to her task; takes heart  
 again,  
 Then feels immediately some hollow  
 thought  
 Hang like an interdict upon her hopes.  
 This is my lot; for either still I find 261  
 Some imperfection in the chosen theme,  
 Or see of absolute accomplishment  
 Much wanting, so much wanting, in my-  
 self,  
 That I recoil and droop, and seek repose  
 In listlessness from vain perplexity, 266  
 Unprofitably travelling toward the grave,  
 Like a false steward who hath much  
 received  
 And renders nothing back.

Was it for this  
 That one, the fairest of all rivers, loved  
 To blend his murmurs with my nurse's  
 song, 271  
 And, from his alder shades and rocky falls,  
 And from his fords and shallows, sent a  
 voice  
 That flowed along my dreams? For this,  
 didst thou, 274  
 O Derwent! winding among grassy holms  
 Where I was looking on, a babe in arms,  
 Make ceaseless music that composed my  
 thoughts  
 To more than infant softness, giving me  
 Amid the fretful dwellings of mankind  
 A foretaste, a dim earnest, of the calm  
 That Nature breathes among the hills  
 and groves. 281

When he had left the mountains and  
 received  
 On his smooth breast the shadow of those  
 towers  
 That yet survive, a shattered monument  
 Of feudal sway, the bright blue river  
 passed 285  
 Along the margin of our terrace walk;  
 A tempting playmate whom we dearly  
 loved.

Oh, many a time have I, a five years'  
 child,  
 In a small mill-race severed from his  
 stream,  
 Made one long bathing of a summer's  
 day; 290  
 Basked in the sun, and plunged and  
 basked again  
 Alternate, all a summer's day, or scoured  
 The sandy fields, leaping through flowery  
 groves  
 Of yellow ragwort; or when rock and  
 hill,  
 The woods, and distant Skiddaw's lofty  
 height, 295  
 Were bronzed with deepest radiance,  
 stood alone  
 Beneath the sky, as if I had been born  
 On Indian plains, and from my mother's  
 hut  
 Had run abroad in wantonness, to sport,  
 A naked savage, in the thunder shower.

Fair seed-time had my soul, and I grew  
 up 301  
 Fostered alike by beauty and by fear:  
 Much favoured in my birthplace, and no  
 less  
 In that beloved Vale to which erelong  
 We were transplanted—there were we let  
 loose 305  
 For sports of wider range. Ere I had  
 told  
 Ten birth-days, when among the mountain-  
 slopes  
 Frost, and the breath of frosty wind, had  
 snapped  
 The last autumnal crocus, 'twas my joy  
 With store of springs o'er my shoulder  
 hung 310  
 To range the open heights where wood-  
 cocks run  
 Among the smooth green turf. Through  
 half the night,  
 Scudding away from snare to snare, I  
 plied  
 That anxious visitation;—moon and stars  
 Were shining o'er my head. I was alone,  
 And seemed to be a trouble to the peace  
 That dwelt among them. Sometimes it  
 befell 317

In these night wanderings, that a strong  
desire

O'erpowered my better reason, and the  
bird

Which was the captive of another's toil  
Became my prey; and when the deed  
was done 321

I heard among the solitary hills  
Low breathings coming after me, and  
sounds

Of undistinguishable motion, steps  
Almost as silent as the turf they trod. 325

Nor less when spring had warmed the  
cultured Vale,

Moved we as plunderers where the mother-  
bird

Had in high places built her lodge;  
though mean

Our object and inglorious, yet the end  
Was not ignoble. Oh! when I have  
hung 330

Above the raven's nest, by knots of grass  
And half-inch fissures in the slippery  
rock

But ill sustained, and almost (so it  
seemed)

Suspended by the blast that blew amain,  
Shouldering the naked crag, oh, at that  
time 335

While on the perilous ridge I hung alone,  
With what strange utterance did the loud  
dry wind

Blow through my ear! the sky seemed  
not a sky

Of earth—and with what motion moved  
the clouds!

Dust as we are, the immortal spirit  
grows 340

Like harmony in music; there is a dark  
Inscrutable workmanship that reconciles  
Discordant elements, makes them cling  
together

In one society. How strange that all  
The terrors, pains, and early miseries, 345  
Regrets, vexations, lassitudes interfused  
Within my mind, should e'er have borne  
a part,

And that a needful part, in making up  
The calm existence that is mine when I

Am worthy of myself! Praise to the  
end! 350

Thanks to the means which Nature  
deigned to employ;

Whether her fearless visitings, or those  
That came with soft alarm, like hurtless  
light

Opening the peaceful clouds; or she may  
use

Severer interventions, ministry 355

More palpable, as best might suit her  
aim.

One summer evening (led by her) I  
found

A little boat tied to a willow tree  
Within a rocky cave, its usual home.

Straight I unloosed her chain, and stepping  
in 360

Pushed from the shore. It was an act of  
stealth

And troubled pleasure, nor without the  
voice

Of mountain-echoes did my boat move on;  
Leaving behind her still, on either side,

Small circles glittering idly in the moon,  
Until they melted all into one track 366

Of sparkling light. But now, like one  
who rows,

Proud of his skill, to reach a chosen point  
With an unswerving line, I fixed my view

Upon the summit of a craggy ridge, 370  
The horizon's utmost boundary; far above

Was nothing but the stars and the grey  
sky.

She was an elfin pinnace; lustily  
I dipped my oars into the silent lake,

And, as I rose upon the stroke, my boat  
Went heaving through the water like

a swan; 376  
When, from behind that craggy steep till

then  
The horizon's bound, a huge peak, black  
and huge,

As if with voluntary power instinct  
Upreared its head. I struck and struck

again, 380  
And growing still in stature the grim

shape  
Towered up between me and the stars,

and still,

For so it seemed, with purpose of its own  
 And measured motion like a living thing,  
 Strode after me. With trembling oars  
     I turned, 385  
 And through the silent water stole my way  
 Back to the covert of the willow tree;  
 There in her mooring-place I left my bark,—  
 And through the meadows homeward  
     went, in grave 389  
 And serious mood; but after I had seen  
 That spectacle, for many days, my brain  
 Worked with a dim and undetermined  
     sense  
 Of unknown modes of being; o'er my  
     thoughts  
 There hung a darkness, call it solitude  
 Or blank desertion. No familiar shapes 395  
 Remained, no pleasant images of trees,  
 Of sea or sky, no colours of green fields;  
 But huge and mighty forms, that do not  
     live  
 Like living men, moved slowly through  
     the mind  
 By day, and were a trouble to my dreams.

Wisdom and Spirit of the universe! 401  
 Thou Soul that art the eternity of thought,  
 That givest to forms and images a breath  
 And everlasting motion, not in vain  
 By day or star-light thus from my first  
     dawn 405  
 Of childhood didst thou intertwine for  
     me  
 The passions that build up our human  
     soul;  
 Not with the mean and vulgar works of  
     man,  
 But with high objects, with enduring  
     things—  
 With life and nature—purifying thus 410  
 The elements of feeling and of thought,  
 And sanctifying, by such discipline,  
 Both pain and fear, until we recognise  
 A grandeur in the beatings of the heart.  
 Nor was this fellowship vouchsafed to me  
 With stinted kindness. In November  
     days, 416  
 When vapours rolling down the valley  
     made

A lonely scene more lonesome, among  
     woods,  
 At noon and 'mid the calm of summer  
     nights,  
 When, by the margin of the trembling  
     lake, 420  
 Beneath the gloomy hills homeward I  
     went  
 In solitude, such intercourse was mine;  
 Mine was it in the fields both day and  
     night,  
 And by the waters, all the summer long.

And in the frosty season, when the sun  
 Was set, and visible for many a mile 426  
 The cottage windows blazed through  
     twilight gloom,  
 I heeded not their summons: happy time  
 It was indeed for all of us—for me  
 It was a time of rapture! Clear and loud  
 The village clock tolled six,—I wheeled  
     about, 431  
 Proud and exulting like an untired horse  
 That cares not for his home. All shod  
     with steel,  
 We hissed along the polished ice in  
     games  
 Confederate, imitative of the chase 435  
 And woodland pleasures,—the resounding  
     horn,  
 The pack loud chiming, and the hunted  
     hare.  
 So through the darkness and the cold we  
     flew,  
 And not a voice was idle; with the din  
 Smitten, the precipices rang aloud; 440  
 The leafless trees and every icy crag  
 Tinkled like iron; while far distant hills  
 Into the tumult sent an alien sound  
 Of melancholy not unnoticed, while the  
     stars  
 Eastward were sparkling clear, and in the  
     west 445  
 The orange sky of evening died away.  
 Not seldom from the uproar I retired  
 Into a silent bay, or sportively  
 Glanced sideways, leaving the tumultuous  
     throng,  
 To cut across the reflex of a star 450  
 That fled, and, flying still before me,  
     gleamed

Upon the glassy plain ; and oftentimes,  
When we had given our bodies to the  
wind,

And all the shadowy banks on either side  
Came sweeping through the darkness,  
spinning still 455

The rapid line of motion, then at once  
Have I, reclining back upon my heels,  
Stopped short ; yet still the solitary cliffs  
Wheeled by me—even as if the earth had  
rolled

With visible motion her diurnal round !  
Behind me did they stretch in solemn  
train, 461

Feebler and feebler, and I stood and  
watched

Till all was tranquil as a dreamless sleep.

Ye Presences of Nature in the sky  
And on the earth ! Ye Visions of the  
hills ! 465

And Souls of lonely places ! can I think  
A vulgar hope was yours when ye em-  
ployed

Such ministry, when ye through many  
a year

Haunting me thus among my boyish  
sports,

On caves and trees, upon the woods and  
hills, 470

Impressed upon all forms the characters  
Of danger or desire ; and thus did make  
The surface of the universal earth

With triumph and delight, with hope  
and fear,

Work like a sea ?

Not uselessly employed,  
Might I pursue this theme through every  
change 476

Of exercise and play, to which the year  
Did summon us in his delightful round.

We were a noisy crew ; the sun in  
heaven

Beheld not vales more beautiful than  
ours ; 480

Nor saw a band in happiness and joy  
Richer, or worthier of the ground they  
trod.

I could record with no reluctant voice  
The woods of autumn, and their hazel  
bowers

With milk-white clusters hung ; the rod  
and line, 485

True symbol of hope's foolishness, whose  
strong

And unproved enchantment led us on  
By rocks and pools shut out from every  
star,

All the green summer, to forlorn cascades  
Among the windings hid of mountain  
brooks. 490

—Unfading recollections ! at this hour  
The heart is almost mine with which  
I felt,

From some hill-top on sunny afternoons,  
The paper kite high among fleecy clouds  
Pull at her rein like an impetuous  
courser ; 495

Or, from the meadows sent on gusty  
days,

Beheld her breast the wind, then suddenly  
Dashed headlong, and rejected by the  
storm.

Ye lowly cottages wherein we dwelt,  
A ministration of your own was yours ; 500  
Can I forget you, being as you were

So beautiful among the pleasant fields  
In which ye stood ? or can I here forget  
The plain and seemly countenance with  
which

Ye dealt out your plain comforts ? Yet  
had ye 505

Delights and exultations of your own.  
Eager and never weary we pursued

Our home-amusements by the warm peat-  
fire

At evening, when with pencil, and smooth  
slate

In square divisions parcelled out and all  
With crosses and with cyphers scribbled  
o'er, 511

We schemed and puzzled, head opposed  
to head

In strife too humble to be named in  
verse :

Or round the naked table, snow-white  
deal,

Cherry or maple, sate in close array, 515  
And to the combat, Loo or Whist, led on

A thick-ribbed army ; not, as in the  
world,

Neglected and ungratefully thrown by  
Even for the very service they had  
wrought,

But husbanded through many a long  
campaign. 520

Uncouth assemblage was it, where no few  
Had changed their functions; some,  
plebeian cards

Which Fate, beyond the promise of their  
birth,

Had dignified, and called to represent  
The persons of departed potentates. 525  
Oh, with what echoes on the board they  
fell!

Ironie diamonds,—clubs, hearts, diamonds,  
spades,

A congregation piteously akin!

Cheap matter offered they to boyish wit,  
Those sooty knaves, precipitated down  
With scoffs and taunts, like Vulcan out  
of heaven: 531

The paramount ace, a moon in her eclipse,  
Queens gleaming through their splendour's last decay,

And monarchs surly at the wrongs sustained

By royal visages. Meanwhile abroad 535  
Incessant rain was falling, or the frost  
Raged bitterly, with keen and silent  
tooth;

And, interrupting oft that eager game,  
From under Esthwaite's splitting fields  
of ice

The pent-up air, struggling to free itself,  
Gave out to meadow-grounds and hills  
a loud 541

Protracted yelling, like the noise of  
wolves

Howling in troops along the Bothnic  
Main.

Nor, sedulous as I have been to trace  
How Nature by extrinsic passion first 545  
Peopled the mind with forms sublime or  
fair,

And made me love them, may I here  
omit

How other pleasures have been mine, and  
joys

Of subtler origin; how I have felt,  
Not seldom even in that tempestuous time,

Those hallowed and pure motions of the  
sense 551

Which seem, in their simplicity, to own  
An intellectual charm; that calm delight  
Which, if I err not, surely must belong  
To those first-born affinities that fit 555  
Our new existence to existing things,  
And, in our dawn of being, constitute  
The bond of union between life and joy.

Yes, I remember when the changeful  
earth,  
And twice five summers on my mind had  
stamped 560

The faces of the moving year, even then  
I held unconscious intercourse with beauty  
Old as creation, drinking in a pure  
Organic pleasure from the silver wreaths  
Of curling mist, or from the level plain 565  
Of waters coloured by impending clouds.

The sands of Westmoreland, the creeks  
and bays

Of Cumbria's rocky limits, they can tell  
How, when the Sea threw off his evening  
shade

And to the shepherd's hut on distant hills  
Sent welcome notice of the rising moon,  
How I have stood, to fancies such as  
these

A stranger, linking with the spectacle 573  
No conscious memory of a kindred sight,  
And bringing with me no peculiar sense  
Of quietness or peace; yet have I stood,  
Even while mine eye hath moved o'er  
many a league

Of shining water, gathering as it seemed,  
Through every hair-breadth in that field  
of light,

New pleasure like a bee among the  
flowers. 580

Thus oft amid those fits of vulgar joy  
Which, through all seasons, on a child's  
pursuits

Are prompt attendants, 'mid that giddy  
bliss

Which, like a tempest, works along the  
blood

And is forgotten; even then I felt 585  
Gleams like the flashing of a shield;—the  
earth

And common face of Nature spake to me  
Rememberable things; sometimes, 'tis  
true,

By chance collisions and quaint accidents  
(Like those ill-sorted unions, work sup-  
posed 590

Of evil-minded fairies), yet not vain  
Nor profitless, if haply they impressed  
Collateral objects and appearances,  
Albeit lifeless then, and doomed to sleep  
Until maturer seasons called them forth  
To impregnate and to elevate the mind.

—And if the vulgar joy by its own  
weight

Wearied itself out of the memory,  
The scenes which were a witness of that  
joy

Remained in their substantial lineaments  
Depicted on the brain, and to the eye 601  
Were visible, a daily sight; and thus

By the impressive discipline of fear,  
By pleasure and repeated happiness,  
So frequently repeated, and by force 605

Of obscure feelings representative  
Of things forgotten, these same scenes so  
bright,

So beautiful, so majestic in themselves,  
Though yet the day was distant, did  
become

Habitually dear, and all their forms 610  
And changeful colours by invisible links  
Were fastened to the affections.

I began

My story early—not misled, I trust,  
By an infirmity of love for days  
Disowned by memory—ere the breath of  
spring 615

Planting my snowdrops among winter  
snows:

Nor will it seem to thee, O Friend! so  
prompt

In sympathy, that I have lengthened out  
With fond and feeble tongue a tedious tale.  
Meanwhile, my hope has been, that I  
might fetch 620

Invigorating thoughts from former years;  
Might fix the wavering balance of my  
mind,

And haply meet reproaches too, whose  
power

May spur me on, in manhood now  
mature,

To honourable toil. Yet should these  
hopes 625

Prove vain, and thus should neither I be  
taught

To understand myself, nor thou to know  
With better knowledge how the heart  
was framed

Of him thou lovest; need I dread from  
thee

Harsh judgments, if the song be loth to  
quit 630

Those recollected hours that have the  
charm

Of visionary things, those lovely forms  
And sweet sensations that throw back  
our life,

And almost make remotest infancy  
A visible scene, on which the sun is  
shining? 635

One end at least hath been attained;  
my mind

Hath been revived, and if this genial  
mood

Desert me not, forthwith shall be brought  
down

Through later years the story of my life.  
The road lies plain before me;—'tis a  
theme 640

Single and of determined bounds; and  
hence

I choose it rather at this time, than work  
Of ampler or more varied argument,  
Where I might be discomfited and lost:

And certain hopes are with me, that to  
thee 645

This labour will be welcome, honoured  
Friend!

## BOOK SECOND.

### SCHOOL-TIME—(CONTINUED).

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>             THUS far, O Friend! have we, though<br/>                 leaving much<br/>             Unvisited, endeavoured to retrace<br/>             The simple ways in which my childhood<br/>                 walked;<br/>             Those chiefly that first led me to the love<br/>             Of rivers, woods, and fields. The passion<br/>                 yet 5<br/>             Was in its birth, sustained as might<br/>                 befall<br/>             By nourishment that came unsought; for<br/>                 still<br/>             From week to week, from month to<br/>                 month, we lived<br/>             A round of tumult. Duly were our games<br/>             Prolonged in summer till the day-light<br/>                 failed: 10<br/>             No chair remained before the doors; the<br/>                 bench<br/>             And threshold steps were empty; fast<br/>                 asleep<br/>             The labourer, and the old man who had<br/>                 sate<br/>             A later lingerer; yet the revelry<br/>             Continued and the loud uproar: at last,<br/>             When all the ground was dark, and<br/>                 twinkling stars 16<br/>             Edged the black clouds, home, and to bed<br/>                 we went,<br/>             Feverish with weary joints and beating<br/>                 minds.<br/>             Ah! is there one who ever has been young,<br/>             Nor needs a warning voice to tame the<br/>                 pride 20<br/>             Of intellect and virtue's self-esteem?<br/>             One is there, though the wisest and the<br/>                 best<br/>             Of all mankind, who covets not at times<br/>             Union that cannot be;—who would not<br/>                 give,<br/>             If so he might, to duty and to truth 25<br/>             The eagerness of infantine desire?<br/>             A tranquillising spirit presses now         </p> | <p>             On my corporeal frame, so wide appears<br/>             The vacancy between me and those days<br/>             Which yet have such self-presence in my<br/>                 mind, 30<br/>             That, musing on them, often do I seem<br/>             Two consciousnesses, conscious of myself<br/>             And of some other Being. A rude mass<br/>             Of native rock, left midway in the square<br/>             Of our small market village, was the goal<br/>             Or centre of these sports; and when,<br/>                 returned 36<br/>             After long absence, thither I repaired,<br/>             Gone was the old grey stone, and in its<br/>                 place<br/>             A smart Assembly-room usurped the<br/>                 ground<br/>             That had been ours. There let the fiddle<br/>                 scream, 40<br/>             And be ye happy! Yet, my Friends! I<br/>                 know<br/>             That more than one of you will think<br/>                 with me<br/>             Of those soft starry nights, and that old<br/>                 Dame<br/>             From whom the stone was named, who<br/>                 there had sate,<br/>             And watched her table with its huckster's<br/>                 wares 45<br/>             Assiduous, through the length of sixty<br/>                 years.<br/> <br/>             We ran a boisterous course; the year<br/>                 span round<br/>             With giddy motion. But the time ap-<br/>                 proached<br/>             That brought with it a regular desire<br/>             For calmer pleasures, when the winning<br/>                 forms 50<br/>             Of Nature were collaterally attached<br/>             To every scheme of holiday delight<br/>             And every boyish sport, less grateful else<br/>             And languidly pursued.<br/> <br/> <div style="text-align: right;">When summer came,</div> </p> |
|--|---|

Our pastime was, on bright half-holi-  
days, 55  
To sweep along the plain of Windermere  
With rival oars; and the selected bourne  
Was now an Island musical with birds  
That sang and ceased not; now a Sister  
Isle  
Beneath the oaks' umbrageous covert,  
sown 60  
With lilies of the valley like a field;  
And now a third small Island, where sur-  
vived  
In solitude the ruins of a shrine  
Once to Our Lady dedicate, and served  
Daily with chaunted rites. In such a  
race 65  
So ended, disappointment could be none,  
Uneasiness, or pain, or jealousy:  
We rested in the shade, all pleased alike,  
Conquered and conqueror. Thus the  
pride of strength,  
And the vain-glory of superior skill, 70  
Were tempered; thus was gradually pro-  
duced  
A quiet independence of the heart;  
And to my Friend who knows me I may  
add,  
Fearless of blame, that hence for future  
days  
Ensued a diffidence and modesty, 75  
And I was taught to feel, perhaps too  
much,  
The self-sufficing power of Solitude.

Our daily meals were frugal, Sabine  
fare!  
More than we wished we knew the bless-  
ing then  
Of vigorous hunger — hence corporeal  
strength 80  
Unsnapped by delicate viands; for, ex-  
clude  
A little weekly stipend, and we lived  
Through three divisions of the quartered  
year  
In penniless poverty. But now to school  
From the half-yearly holidays returned,  
We came with weightier purses, that  
sufficed 86  
To furnish treats more costly than the  
Dame

Of the old grey stone, from her scant  
board, supplied.  
Hence rustic dinners on the cool green  
ground,  
Or in the woods, or by a river's side 90  
Or shady fountain's, while among the  
leaves  
Soft airs were stirring, and the mid-day  
sun  
Unfelt shone brightly round us in our joy.  
Nor is my aim neglected if I tell  
How sometimes, in the length of those  
half-years, 95  
We from our funds drew largely; — proud  
to curb,  
And eager to spur on, the galloping steed;  
And with the courteous inn-keeper, whose  
stud  
Supplied our want, we haply might  
employ  
Sly subterfuge, if the adventure's bound  
Were distant: some famed temple where  
of yore 101  
The Druids worshipped, or the antique  
walls  
Of that large abbey, where within the  
Vale  
Of Nightshade, to St. Mary's honour  
built,  
Stands yet a mouldering pile with frac-  
tured arch, 105  
Belfry, and images, and living trees;  
A holy scene! — Along the smooth green  
turf  
Our horses grazed. To more than inland  
peace,  
Left by the west wind sweeping overhead  
From a tumultuous ocean, trees and  
towers 110  
In that sequestered valley may be seen,  
Both silent and both motionless alike;  
Such the deep shelter that is there, and  
such  
The safeguard for repose and quietness.

Our steeds remounted and the summons  
given, 115  
With whip and spur we through the  
chauntry flew  
In uncouth race, and left the cross-legged  
knight,

And the stone-abbot, and that single  
wren  
Which one day sang so sweetly in the  
nave  
Of the old church, that—though from  
recent showers 120  
The earth was comfortless, and, touched  
by faint  
Internal breezes, sobbings of the place  
And respirations, from the roofless walls  
The shuddering ivy dripped large drops—  
yet still  
So sweetly 'mid the gloom the invisible  
bird 125  
Sang to herself, that there I could have  
made  
My dwelling-place, and lived for ever  
there  
To hear such music. Through the walls  
we flew  
And down the valley, and, a circuit made  
In wantonness of heart, through rough  
and smooth 130  
We scampered homewards. Oh, ye rocks  
and streams,  
And that still spirit shed from evening  
air!  
Even in this joyous time I sometimes  
felt  
Your presence, when with slackened step  
we breathed  
Along the sides of the steep hills, or when  
Lighted by gleams of moonlight from the  
sea 136  
We beat with thundering hoofs the level  
sand.  
Midway on long Winander's eastern  
shore,  
Within the crescent of a pleasant bay,  
A tavern stood; no homely-featured  
house, 140  
Primeval like its neighbouring cottages,  
But 'twas a splendid place, the door be-  
set  
With chaises, grooms, and liveries, and  
within  
Decanters, glasses, and the blood-red wine.  
In ancient times, and ere the Hall was  
built 145  
On the large island, had this dwelling been

More worthy of a poet's love, a hut,  
Proud of its own bright fire and sycamore  
shade.  
But—though the rhymes were gone that  
once inscribed  
The threshold, and large golden cha-  
racters, 150  
Spread o'er the spangled sign-board, had  
dislodged  
The old Lion and usurped his place, in  
slight  
And mockery of the rustic painter's  
hand—  
Yet, to this hour, the spot to me is dear  
With all its foolish pomp. The garden  
lay 155  
Upon a slope surmounted by a plain  
Of a small bowling-green; beneath us  
stood  
A grove, with gleams of water through  
the trees  
And over the tree-tops; nor did we want  
Refreshment, strawberries and mellow  
cream. 160  
There, while through half an afternoon  
we played  
On the smooth platform, whether skill  
prevailed  
Or happy blunder triumphed, bursts of  
glee  
Made all the mountains ring. But, ere  
nightfall,  
When in our pinnace we returned at  
leisure 165  
Over the shadowy lake, and to the beach  
Of some small island steered our course  
with one,  
The Minstrel of the Troop, and left him  
there,  
And rowed off gently, while he blew his  
flute  
Alone upon the rock—oh, then, the calm  
And dead still water lay upon my mind  
Even with a weight of pleasure, and the  
sky,  
Never before so beautiful, sank down  
Into my heart, and held me like a dream!  
Thus were my sympathies enlarged, and  
thus 175  
Daily the common range of visible things  
Grew dear to me: already I began

To love the sun ; a boy I loved the sun,  
 Not as I since have loved him, as a pledge  
 And surety of our earthly life, a light 180  
 Which we behold and feel we are alive ;  
 Nor for his bounty to so many worlds—  
 But for this cause, that I had seen him  
 lay

His beauty on the morning hills, had  
 seen

The western mountain touch his setting  
 orb, 185

In many a thoughtless hour, when, from  
 excess

Of happiness, my blood appeared to flow  
 For its own pleasure, and I breathed with  
 joy.

And, from like feelings, humble though  
 intense,

To patriotic and domestic love 190

Analogous, the moon to me was dear ;  
 For I could dream away my purposes,  
 Standing to gaze upon her while she  
 hung

Midway between the hills, as if she knew

No other region, but belonged to thee, 195

Yea, appertained by a peculiar right

To thee and thy grey huts, thou one dear  
 Vale !

Those incidental charms which first  
 attached

My heart to rural objects, day by day

Grew weaker, and I hasten on to tell 200

How Nature, intervenient till this time

And secondary, now at length was sought

For her own sake. But who shall parcel  
 out

His intellect by geometric rules,

Split like a province into round and  
 square ? 205

Who knows the individual hour in which

His habits were first sown, even as a  
 seed ?

Who that shall point as with a wand and  
 say

"This portion of the river of my mind

Came from yon fountain?" Thou, my

Friend ! art one 210

More deeply read in thy own thoughts ;  
 to thee

Science appears but what in truth she is,

Not as our glory and our absolute boast,  
 But as a succedaneum, and a prop  
 To our infirmity. No officious slave 215  
 Art thou of that false secondary power  
 By which we multiply distinctions, then  
 Deem that our puny boundaries are  
 things

That we perceive, and not that we have  
 made.

To thee, unblinded by these formal arts,

The unity of all hath been revealed, 221

And thou wilt doubt, with me less aptly  
 skilled

Than many are to range the faculties

In scale and order, class the cabinet

Of their sensations, and in voluble phrase

Run through the history and birth of  
 each 226

As of a single independent thing.

Hard task, vain hope, to analyse the  
 mind,

If each most obvious and particular  
 thought,

Not in a mystical and idle sense, 230

But in the words of Reason deeply  
 weighed,

Hath no beginning.

Blest the infant Babe,  
 (For with my best conjecture I would  
 trace

Our Being's earthly progress,) blest the  
 Babe,

Nursed in his Mother's arms, who sinks  
 to sleep, 235

Rocked on his Mother's breast ; who with  
 his soul

Drinks in the feelings of his Mother's  
 eye !

For him, in one dear Presence, there  
 exists

A virtue which irradiates and exalts

Objects through widest intercourse of  
 sense. 240

No outcast he, bewildered and depressed :

Along his infant veins are interfused

The gravitation and the filial bond

Of nature that connect him with the  
 world.

Is there a flower, to which he points with  
 hand 245

Too weak to gather it, already love

Drawn from love's purest earthly fount  
 for him  
 Hath beautified that flower; already  
 shades  
 Of pity cast from inward tenderness  
 Do fall around him upon aught that bears  
 Unsightly marks of violence or harm. 251  
 Emphatically such a Being lives,  
 Frail creature as he is, helpless as frail,  
 An inmate of this active universe:  
 For feeling has to him imparted power  
 That through the growing faculties of  
 sense 256  
 Doth like an agent of the one great Mind  
 Create, creator and receiver both,  
 Working but in alliance with the works  
 Which it beholds.—Such, verily, is the  
 first 260  
 Poetic spirit of our human life,  
 By uniform control of after years,  
 In most, abated or suppressed; in some,  
 Through every change of growth and of  
 decay,  
 Pre-eminent till death.  
 From early days, 265  
 Beginning not long after that first time  
 In which, a Babe, by intercourse of touch  
 I held mute dialogues with my Mother's  
 heart,  
 I have endeavoured to display the means  
 Whereby this infant sensibility, 270  
 Great birthright of our being, was in me  
 Augmented and sustained. Yet is a path  
 More difficult before me; and I fear  
 That in its broken windings we shall need  
 The chamois' sinews, and the eagle's  
 wing: 275  
 For now a trouble came into my mind  
 From unknown causes. I was left alone  
 Seeking the visible world, nor knowing  
 why.  
 The props of my affections were removed,  
 And yet the building stood, as if sus-  
 tained 280  
 By its own spirit! All that I beheld  
 Was dear, and hence to finer influxes  
 The mind lay open, to a more exact  
 And close communion. Many are our  
 joys 284  
 In youth, but oh! what happiness to live  
 When every hour brings palpable access  
 Of knowledge, when all knowledge is  
 delight,  
 And sorrow is not there! The seasons  
 came,  
 And every season wheresoe'er I moved  
 Unfolded transitory qualities, 290  
 Which, but for this most watchful power  
 of love,  
 Had been neglected; left a register  
 Of permanent relations, else unknown.  
 Hence life, and change, and beauty, soli-  
 tude  
 More active even than "best society"—  
 Society made sweet as solitude 296  
 By silent inobtrusive sympathies,  
 And gentle agitations of the mind  
 From manifold distinctions, difference  
 Perceived in things, where, to the un-  
 watchful eye, 300  
 No difference is, and hence, from the  
 same source,  
 Sublimier joy; for I would walk alone,  
 Under the quiet stars, and at that time  
 Have felt whate'er there is of power in  
 sound 304  
 To breathe an elevated mood, by form  
 Or image unprofaned; and I would stand,  
 If the night blackened with a coming  
 storm,  
 Beneath some rock, listening to notes  
 that are  
 The ghostly language of the ancient earth,  
 Or make their dim abode in distant  
 winds. 310  
 Thence did I drink the visionary power;  
 And deem not profitless those fleeting  
 moods  
 Of shadowy exultation: not for this,  
 That they are kindred to our purer mind  
 And intellectual life; but that the soul,  
 Remembering how she felt, but what she  
 felt 316  
 Remembering not, retains an obscure  
 sense  
 Of possible sublimity, whereto  
 With growing faculties she doth aspire,  
 With faculties still growing, feeling still  
 That whatsoever point they gain, they  
 yet 321  
 Have something to pursue.  
 And not alone,

'Mid gloom and tumult, but no less 'mid  
fair

And tranquil scenes, that universal power  
And fitness in the latent qualities 325

And essences of things, by which the mind  
Is moved with feelings of delight, to me

Came strengthened with a superadded soul,  
A virtue not its own. My morning walks

Were early;—oft before the hours of  
school 330

I travelled round our little lake, five  
miles

Of pleasant wandering. Happy time!  
more dear

For this, that one was by my side, a  
Friend<sup>1</sup>,

Then passionately loved; with heart how  
full

Would he peruse these lines! For many  
years 335

Have since flowed in between us, and,  
our minds

Both silent to each other, at this time  
We live as if those hours had never been.

Nor seldom did I lift our cottage latch  
Far earlier, ere one smoke-wreath had

risen 340

From human dwelling, or the vernal  
thrush

Was audible; and sate among the woods  
Alone upon some jutting eminence,

At the first gleam of dawn-light, when the  
Vale,

Yet slumbering, lay in utter solitude. 345

How shall I seek the origin? where find  
Faith in the marvellous things which then

I felt?

Oft in these moments such a holy calm  
Would overspread my soul, that bodily

eyes •  
Were utterly forgotten, and what I saw  
Appeared like something in myself, a

dream, 351

A prospect in the mind.

What spring and autumn, what the winter  
snows,

And what the summer shade, what day  
and night,

Evening and morning, sleep and waking,  
thought 355

From sources inexhaustible, poured forth  
To feed the spirit of religious love

In which I walked with Nature. But let  
this

Be not forgotten, that I still retained  
My first creative sensibility; 360

That by the regular action of the world  
My soul was unsubdued. A plastic power

Abode with me; a forming hand, at times  
Rebellious, acting in a devious mood;

A local spirit of his own, at war 265

With general tendency, but, for the most,  
Subservient strictly to external things

With which it communed. An auxiliar  
light

Came from my mind, which on the setting  
sun

Bestowed new splendour; the melodious  
birds, 370

The fluttering breezes, fountains that run  
on

Murmuring so sweetly in themselves,  
obeyed

A like dominion, and the midnight storm  
Grew darker in the presence of my eye:

Hence my obeisance, my devotion hence,  
And hence my transport.

Nor should this, perchance,  
Pass unrecorded, that I still had loved

The exercise and produce of a toil,  
Than analytic industry to me

More pleasing, and whose character I  
deem 380

Is more poetic as resembling more  
Creative agency. The song would speak

Of that terminable building reared  
By observation of affinities

In objects where no brotherhood exists  
To passive minds. My seventeenth year

was come; 386

And, whether from this habit rooted now  
So deeply in my mind, or from excess

In the great social principle of life  
Coercing all things into sympathy, 390

To unorganic natures were transferred  
My own enjoyments; or the power of truth

Coming in revelation, did converse  
With things that really are; I, at this  
time,

<sup>1</sup> Rev. John Fleming, of Rayrigg, Windermere.  
—Ed. of 1850.

Saw blessings spread around me like a sea.  
Thus while the days flew by, and years  
passed on, 396

From Nature and her overflowing soul  
I had received so much, that all my  
thoughts

Were steeped in feeling; I was only then  
Contented, when with bliss ineffable 400  
I felt the sentiment of Being spread  
O'er all that moves and all that seemeth  
still;

O'er all that, lost beyond the reach of  
thought

And human knowledge, to the human eye  
Invisible, yet liveth to the heart; 405  
O'er all that leaps and runs, and shouts  
and sings,

Or beats the gladsome air; o'er all that  
glides

Beneath the wave, yea, in the wave itself,  
And mighty depth of waters. Wond'ring  
If high the transport, great the joy I felt  
Communing in this sort through earth  
and heaven 411

With every form of creature, as it looked  
Towards the Uncreated with a counte-  
nance

Of adoration, with an eye of love. 414  
One song they sang, and it was audible,  
Most audible, then, when the fleshly ear,  
O'ercome by humblest prelude of that  
strain,

Forgot her functions, and slept undis-  
turbed.

If this be error, and another faith  
Find easier access to the pious mind, 420  
Yet were I grossly destitute of all  
Those human sentiments that make this  
earth

So dear, if I should fail with grateful voice  
To speak of you, ye mountains, and ye  
lakes

And sounding cataracts, ye mists and  
winds 425

That dwell among the hills where I was  
born.

If in my youth I have been pure in heart,  
If, mingling with the world, I am content  
With my own modest pleasures, and have  
lived

With God and Nature communing, re-  
moved 430

From little enmities and low desires,  
The gift is yours; if in these times of fear  
This melancholy waste of hopes o'er-  
thrown,

If, 'mid indifference and apathy, 434  
And wicked exultation when good men  
On every side fall off, we know not how,  
To selfishness, disguised in gentle names  
Of peace and quiet and domestic love,  
Yet mingled not unwillingly with sneers  
On visionary minds; if, in this time 440  
Of dereliction and dismay, I yet

Despair not of our nature, but retain  
A more than Roman confidence, a faith  
That fails not, in all sorrow my support,  
The blessing of my life; the gift is yours,  
Ye winds and sounding cataracts! 'tis  
yours,

Ye mountains! thine, O Nature! Thou  
hast fed

My lofty speculations; and in thee,  
For this uneasy heart of ours, I find  
A never-failing principle of joy 450  
And purest passion.

Thou, my Friend! wert reared  
In the great city, 'mid far other scenes;  
But we, by different roads, at length have  
gained  
The self-same bourne. And for this cause  
to thee

I speak, unapprehensive of contempt, 455  
The insinuated scoff of coward tongues,  
And all that silent language which so oft  
In conversation between man and man  
Blots from the human countenance all trace  
Of beauty and of love. For thou hast  
sought 460

The truth in solitude, and, since the days  
That gave thee liberty, full long desired,  
To serve in Nature's temple, thou hast been  
The most assiduous of her ministers; 464  
In many things my brother, chiefly here  
In this our deep devotion.

Fare thee well!  
Health and the quiet of a healthful mind  
Attend thee! seeking oft the haunts of men,  
And yet more often living with thyself,  
And for thyself, so haply shall thy days  
Be many, and a blessing to mankind. 471

## BOOK THIRD.

### RESIDENCE AT CAMBRIDGE.

It was a dreary morning when the wheels  
Rolled over a wide plain o'erhung with  
clouds,  
And nothing cheered our way till first  
we saw  
The long-roofed chapel of King's College  
lift  
Turrets and pinnacles in answering files,  
Extended high above a dusky grove. 6

Advancing, we espied upon the road  
A student clothed in gown and tasselled  
cap,  
Striding along as if o'ertasked by Time,  
Or covetous of exercise and air; 10  
He passed—nor was I master of my eyes  
Till he was left an arrow's flight behind.  
As near and nearer to the spot we drew,  
It seemed to suck us in with an eddy's  
force.  
Onward we drove beneath the Castle;  
caught, 15  
While crossing Magdalene Bridge, a  
glimpse of Cam;  
And at the *Hoop* alighted, famous Inn.

My spirit was up, my thoughts were  
full of hope;  
Some friends I had, acquaintances who  
there  
Seemed friends, poor simple schoolboys,  
now hung round 20  
With honour and importance: in a world  
Of welcome faces up and down I roved;  
Questions, directions, warnings and ad-  
vice,  
Flowed in upon me, from all sides; fresh  
day 24  
Of pride and pleasure! to myself I seemed  
A man of business and expense, and went

From shop to shop about my own affairs,  
To Tutor or to Tailor, as befell,  
From street to street with loose and care-  
less mind.

I was the Dreamer, they the Dream;  
I roamed 30  
Delighted through the motley spectacle;  
Gowns grave, or gaudy, doctors, students,  
streets,  
Courts, cloisters, flocks of churches, gate-  
ways, towers:  
Migration strange for a stripling of the  
hills,  
A northern villager.

As if the change 35  
Had waited on some Fairy's wand, at once  
Behold me rich in monies, and attired  
In splendid garb, with hose of silk, and  
hair  
Powdered like rimy trees, when frost is  
keen.  
My lordly dressing-gown, I pass it by, 40  
With other signs of manhood that sup-  
plied  
The lack of beard.—The weeks went  
roundly on,  
With invitations, suppers, wine and fruit,  
Smooth housekeeping within, and all  
without  
Liberal, and suiting gentleman's array. 45

The Evangelist St. John my patron was:  
Three Gothic courts are his, and in the  
first  
Was my abiding-place, a nook obscure;  
Right underneath, the College kitchens  
made  
A humming sound, less tuneable than  
bees, 50

But hardly less industrious; with shrill  
notes

Of sharp command and scolding inter-  
mixed.

Near me hung Trinity's loquacious clock,  
Who never let the quarters, night or day,  
Slip by him unproclaimed, and told the  
hours

Twice over with a male and female voice.  
Her pealing organ was my neighbour too;  
And from my pillow, looking forth by  
light

Of moon or favouring stars, I could be-  
hold

The antechapel where the statue stood 60  
Of Newton with his prism and silent face,  
The marble index of a mind for ever  
Voyaging through strange seas of Thought,  
alone.

Of College labours, of the Lecturer's  
room

All studded round, as thick as chairs  
could stand,

With loyal students faithful to their  
books,

Half-and-half idlers, hardy recusants,  
And honest dunces—of important days,  
Examinations, when the man was weighed  
As in a balance! of excessive hopes,

Tremblings withal and commendable  
fears,

Small jealousies, and triumphs good or  
bad—

Let others that know more speak as they  
know.

Such glory was but little sought by me,  
And little won. Yet from the first crude  
days

Of settling time in this untried abode, 75  
I was disturbed at times by prudent  
thoughts,

Wishing to hope without a hope, some  
fears

About my future worldly maintenance,  
And, more than all, a strangeness in the  
mind,

A feeling that I was not for that hour,  
Nor for that place. But wherefore be  
cast down?

For (not to speak of Reason and her pure

Reflective acts to fix the moral law  
Deep in the conscience, nor of Christian  
Hope,

Bowing her head before her sister Faith 85  
As one far mightier, hither I had come,  
Bear witness Truth, endowed with holy  
powers

And faculties, whether to work or feel.  
Oft when the dazzling show no longer new  
Had ceased to dazzle, oftentimes did I quit  
My comrades, leave the crowd, buildings  
and groves,

And as I paced alone the level fields  
Far from those lovely sights and sounds  
sublime

With which I had been conversant, the  
mind 95  
Drooped not; but there into herself re-  
turning,

With prompt rebound seemed fresh as  
heretofore.

At least I more distinctly recognised  
Her native instincts: let me dare to speak  
A higher language, say that now I felt

What independent solaces were mine, 100  
To mitigate the injurious sway of place  
Or circumstance, how far soever changed  
In youth, or to be changed in after years.  
As if awakened, summoned, roused, con-  
strained,

I looked for universal things; perused 105  
The common countenance of earth and  
sky:

Earth, nowhere unembellished by some  
trace

Of that first Paradise whence man was  
driven;

And sky, whose beauty and bounty are  
expressed 110

By the proud name she bears—the name  
of Heaven.

I called on both to teach me what they  
might;

Or turning the mind in upon herself,  
Pored, watched, expected, listened, spread  
my thoughts

And spread them with a wider creeping;  
felt 115

Incumbencies more awful, visitings  
Of the Upholder of the tranquil soul,  
That tolerates the indignities of Time,

And, from the centre of Eternity  
 All finite motions overruling, lives 120  
 In glory immutable. But peace! enough  
 Here to record that I was mounting now  
 To such community with highest truth—  
 A track pursuing, not untrod before,  
 From strict analogies by thought supplied 125

Or consciousnesses not to be subdued.  
 To every natural form, rock, fruit, or  
 flower,

Even the loose stones that cover the high-  
 way,

I gave a moral life: I saw them feel,  
 Or linked them to some feeling: the great  
 mass 130

Lay bedded in a quickening soul, and all  
 That I beheld respired with inward  
 meaning.

Add that whate'er of Terror or of Love  
 Or Beauty, Nature's daily face put on  
 From transitory passion, unto this 135

I was as sensitive as waters are  
 To the sky's influence in a kindred mood  
 Of passion; was obedient as a lute  
 That waits upon the touches of the wind.  
 Unknown, unthought of, yet I was most  
 rich— 140

I had a world about me—'twas my own;  
 I made it, for it only lived to me,  
 And to the God who sees into the heart.  
 Such sympathies, though rarely, were be-  
 trayed 144

By outward gestures and by visible looks:  
 Some called it madness—so indeed it was,  
 If child-like fruitfulness in passing joy,  
 If steady moods of thoughtfulness ma-  
 tured

To inspiration, sort with such a name;  
 If prophecy be madness; if things viewed  
 By poets in old time, and higher up 151  
 By the first men, earth's first inhabitants,  
 May in these tutored days no more be  
 seen

With undisturbed sight. But leaving  
 this,

It was no madness, for the bodily eye 155  
 Amid my strongest workings evermore  
 Was searching out the lines of difference  
 As they lie hid in all external forms,  
 Near or remote, minute or vast; an eye

Which, from a tree, a stone, a withered  
 leaf, 160

To the broad ocean and the azure heavens  
 Spangled with kindred multitudes of  
 stars,

Could find no surface where its power  
 might sleep;

Which spake perpetual logic to my soul,  
 And by an unrelenting agency 165  
 Did bind my feelings even as in a chain.

And here, O Friend! have I retraced  
 my life

Up to an eminence, and told a tale  
 Of matters which not falsely may be  
 called

The glory of my youth. Of genius,  
 power, 170

Creation and divinity itself

I have been speaking, for my theme has  
 been

What passed within me. Not of outward  
 things

Done visibly for other minds, words, signs,  
 Symbols or actions, but of my own heart  
 Have I been speaking, and my youthful  
 mind. 176

O Heavens! how awful is the might of  
 souls,

And what they do within themselves  
 while yet

The yoke of earth is new to them, the  
 world

Nothing but a wild field where they were  
 sown. 180

This is, in truth, heroic argument,  
 This genuine prowess, which I wished to  
 touch

With hand however weak, but in the  
 main

It lies far hidden from the reach of words.  
 Points have we all of us within our souls  
 Where all stand single; this I feel, and  
 make 186

Breathings for incommunicable powers;  
 But is not each a memory to himself?—

And, therefore, now that we must quit  
 this theme,

I am not heartless, for there's not a man  
 That lives who hath not known his god-  
 like hours, 191

And feels not what an empire we inherit  
As natural beings in the strength of  
Nature.

No more: for now into a populous plain  
We must descend. A Traveller I am, 195  
Whose tale is only of himself; even so,  
So be it, if the pure of heart be prompt  
To follow, and if thou, my honoured  
Friend!

Who in these thoughts art ever at my  
side,  
Support, as heretofore, my fainting steps.

It hath been told, that when the first  
delight 201  
That flashed upon me from this novel  
show

Had failed, the mind returned into her-  
self;

Yet true it is, that I had made a change  
In climate, and my nature's outward coat  
Changed also slowly and insensibly. 206  
Full oft the quiet and exalted thoughts  
Of loneliness gave way to empty noise  
And superficial pastimes; now and then  
Forced labour, and more frequently forced  
hopes; 210

And, worst of all, a treasonable growth  
Of indecisive judgments, that impaired  
And shook the mind's simplicity.—And  
yet

This was a gladsome time. Could I be-  
hold—

Who, less insensible than sodden clay 215  
In a sea-river's bed at ebb of tide,  
Could have beheld,—with undelighted  
heart,

So many happy youths, so wide and fair  
A congregation in its budding-time  
Of health, and hope, and beauty, all at  
once 220

So many divers samples from the growth  
Of life's sweet season—could have seen  
unmoved

That miscellaneous garland of wild flowers  
Decking the matron temples of a place  
So famous through the world? To me, at  
least, 225

It was a goodly prospect: for, in sooth,  
Though I had learnt betimes to stand  
unproped,

And independent musings pleased me so  
That spells seemed on me when I was  
alone,

Yet could I only cleave to solitude 230  
In lonely places; if a throng was near  
That way I leaned by nature; for my  
heart

Was social, and loved idleness and joy.

Not seeking those who might participate  
My deeper pleasures (nay, I had not once,  
Though not unused to mutter lonesome  
songs, 236

Even with myself divided such delight,  
Or looked that way for aught that might  
be clothed

In human language), easily I passed  
From the remembrances of better things,  
And slipped into the ordinary works 241  
Of careless youth, unburdened, unalarmed.

*Caverns* there were within my mind which  
sun

Could never penetrate, yet did there not  
Want store of leafy *arbours* where the  
light 245

Might enter in at will. Companionships,  
Friendships, acquaintances, were welcome  
all.

We sauntered, played, or rioted; we  
talked

Unprofitable talk at morning hours;  
Drifted about along the streets and  
walks, 250

Read lazily in trivial books, went forth  
To gallop through the country in blind  
zeal

Of senseless horsemanship, or on the breast  
Of Cam sailed boisterously, and let the  
stars

Come forth, perhaps without one quiet  
thought. 255

Such was the tenour of the second act  
In this new life. Imagination slept,  
And yet not utterly. I could not print  
Ground where the grass had yielded to  
the steps

Of generations of illustrious men, 260  
Unmoved. I could not always lightly  
pass

Through the same gateways, sleep where  
they had slept,

Wake where they waked, range that inclosure old,  
That garden of great intellects, undisturbed.

Place also by the side of this dark sense  
Of noble feeling, that those spiritual men, 266

Even the great Newton's own ethereal self,

Seemed humbled in these precincts thence to be

The more endeared. Their several memories here

(Even like their persons in their portraits clothed 270

With the accustomed garb of daily life)

Put on a lowly and a touching grace

Of more distinct humanity, that left

All genuine admiration unimpaired.

Beside the pleasant Mill of Trompington  
I laughed with Chaucer in the hawthorn shade; 276

Heard him, while birds were warbling, tell his tales

Of amorous passion. And that gentle Bard,

Chosen by the Muses for their Page of State—

Sweet Spenser, moving through his clouded heaven 280

With the moon's beauty and the moon's soft pace,

I called him Brother, Englishman, and Friend!

Yea, our blind Poet, who, in his later day,  
Stood almost single; uttering odious truth—

Darkness before, and danger's voice behind, • 285

Soul awful—if the earth has ever lodged  
An awful soul—I seemed to see him here

Familiarly, and in his scholar's dress  
Bounding before me, yet a stripling youth—

A boy, no better, with his rosy cheeks 290  
Angelical, keen eye, courageous look,

And conscious step of purity and pride.  
Among the band of my compeers was one

Whom chance had stationed in the very room

Honoured by Milton's name. O temperate Bard! 295

Be it confessed that, for the first time, seated

Within thy innocent lodge and oratory,  
One of a festive circle, I poured out

Libations, to thy memory drank, till pride

And gratitude grew dizzy in a brain 300  
Never excited by the fumes of wine

Before that hour, or since. Then, forth I ran

From the assembly; through a length of streets,

Ran, ostrich-like, to reach our chapel door  
In not a desperate or opprobrious time,

Albeit long after the importunate bell 306  
Had stopped, with wearisome Cassandra voice

No longer haunting the dark winter night.  
Call back, O Friend! a moment to thy mind,

The place itself and fashion of the rites. 310  
With careless ostentation shouldering up

My surplice, through the inferior throng  
I clove

Of the plain Burghers, who in audience stood

On the last skirts of their permitted ground,

Under the pealing organ. Empty thoughts! 315

I am ashamed of them: and that great Bard,

And thou, O Friend! who in thy ample mind

Hast placed me high above my best deserts,

Ye will forgive the weakness of that hour,  
In some of its unworthy vanities, 320

Brother to many more.

In this mixed sort  
The months passed on, remissly, not given up

To wilful alienation from the right, 323  
Or walks of open scandal, but in vague

And loose indifference, easy likings, aims  
Of a low pitch—duty and zeal dismissed,

Yet Nature, or a happy course of things  
Not doing in their stead the needful work.

The memory languidly revolved, the heart

Reposed in noontide rest, the inner pulse  
 Of contemplation almost failed to beat. 331  
 Such life might not inaptly be compared  
 To a floating island, an amphibious spot  
 Unsound, of spongy texture, yet withal  
 Not wanting a fair face of water-weeds  
 And pleasant flowers. The thirst of living  
     praise, 336  
 Fit reverence for the glorious Dead, the  
     sight  
 Of those long vistas, sacred catacombs,  
 Where mighty *minds* lie visibly entombed,  
 Have often stirred the heart of youth,  
     and bred 340  
 A fervent love of rigorous discipline.—  
 Alas! such high emotion touched not me.  
 Look was there none within these walls  
     to shame  
 My easy spirits, and discountenance 344  
 Their light composure, far less to instil  
 A calm resolve of mind, firmly addressed  
 To puissant efforts. Nor was this the  
     blame  
 Of others but my own; I should, in truth,  
 As far as doth concern my single self,  
 Misdeem most widely, lodging it else-  
     where: 350  
 For I, bred up 'mid Nature's luxuries,  
 Was a spoiled child, and, rambling like  
     the wind,  
 As I had done in daily intercourse  
 With those crystalline rivers, solemn  
     heights,  
 And mountains, ranging like a fowl of  
     the air, 355  
 I was ill-tutored for captivity;  
 To quit my pleasure, and, from month to  
     month,  
 Take up a station calmly on the perch  
 Of sedentary peace. Those lovely forms  
 Had also left less space within my mind,  
 Which, wrought upon instinctively, had  
     found 361  
 A freshness in those objects of her love,  
 A winning power, beyond all other power.  
 Not that I slighted books,—that were to  
     lack  
 All sense,—but other passions in me  
     ruled, 365  
 Passions more fervent, making me less  
     prompt

To in-door study than was wise or well,  
 Or suited to those years. Yet I, though  
     used  
 In magisterial liberty to rove,  
 Culling such flowers of learning as might  
     tempt 370  
 A random choice, could shadow forth a  
     place  
 (If now I yield not to a flattering dream)  
 Whose studious aspect should have bent  
     me down  
 To instantaneous service; should at once  
 Have made me pay to science and to arts  
 And written lore, acknowledged my liege  
     lord, 376  
 A homage frankly offered up, like that  
 Which I had paid to Nature. Toil and  
     pains  
 In this recess, by thoughtful Fancy built,  
 Should spread from heart to heart; and  
     stately groves, 380  
 Majestic edifices, should not want  
 A corresponding dignity within.  
 The congregating temper that pervades  
 Our unripe years, not wasted, should be  
     taught  
 To minister to works of high attempt—  
 Works which the enthusiast would per-  
     form with love. 386  
 Youth should be awed, religiously pos-  
     sessed  
 With a conviction of the power that waits  
 On knowledge, when sincerely sought and  
     prized 389  
 For its own sake, on glory and on praise  
 If but by labour won, and fit to endure  
 The passing day; should learn to put  
     aside  
 Her trappings here, should strip them off  
     abashed  
 Before antiquity and steadfast truth  
 And strong book-mindedness; and over  
     all 395  
 A healthy sound simplicity should reign,  
 A seemly plainness, name it what you  
     will,  
 Republican or pious.  
                                     If these thoughts  
 Are a gratuitous emblazonry  
 That mocks the recreant age *we* live in,  
     then 400

Be Folly and False-seeming free to affect  
 Whatever formal gait of discipline  
 Shall raise them highest in their own  
 esteem—

Let them parade among the Schools at  
 will,

But spare the House of God. Was ever  
 known 405

The witless shepherd who persists to  
 drive

A flock that thirsts not to a pool disliked?  
 A weight must surely hang on days begun  
 And ended with such mockery. Be wise,  
 Ye Presidents and Deans, and, till the  
 spirit 410

Of ancient times revive, and youth be  
 trained

At home in pious service, to your bells  
 Give seasonable rest, for 'tis a sound  
 Hollow as ever vexed the tranquil air;  
 And your officious doings bring disgrace  
 On the plain steeples of our English  
 Church, 416

Whose worship, 'mid remotest village  
 trees,

Suffers for this. Even Science, too, at  
 hand

In daily sight of this irreverence,  
 Is smitten thence with an unnatural taint,  
 Loses her just authority, falls beneath  
 Collateral suspicion, else unknown. 422  
 This truth escaped me not, and I confess,  
 That having 'mid my native hills given  
 loose

To a schoolboy's vision, I had raised a  
 pile 425

Upon the basis of the coming time,  
 That fell in ruins round me. Oh, what  
 joy

To see a sanctuary for our country's youth  
 Informed with such a spirit as might be  
 Its own protection; a primeval grove, 430  
 Where, though the shades with cheerful-  
 ness were filled,

Nor indigent of songs warbled from crowds  
 In under-coverts, yet the countenance  
 Of the whole place should bear a stamp  
 of awe;

A habitation sober and demure 435  
 For ruminating creatures; a domain  
 For quiet things to wander in; a haunt

In which the heron should delight to feed  
 By the shy rivers, and the pelican 439  
 Upon the cypress spire in lonely thought  
 Might sit and sun himself.—Alas! alas!  
 In vain for such solemnity I looked;  
 Mine eyes were crossed by butterflies,  
 ears vexed

By chattering popinjays; the inner heart  
 Seemed trivial, and the impresses without  
 Of a too gaudy region.

Different sight 446  
 Those venerable Doctors saw of old,  
 When all who dwelt within these famous  
 walls

Led in abstemiousness a studious life;  
 When, in forlorn and naked chambers  
 cooped 450  
 And crowded, o'er the ponderous books  
 they hung

Like caterpillars eating out their way  
 In silence, or with keen devouring noise  
 Not to be tracked or fathered. Princes  
 then

At matins froze, and couched at curfew-  
 time, 455  
 Trained up through piety and zeal to  
 prize

Spare diet, patient labour, and plain  
 weeds.  
 O seat of Arts! renowned throughout the  
 world!

Far different service in those homely days  
 The Muses' modest nurslings underwent  
 From their first childhood: in that glo-  
 rious time 461

When Learning, like a stranger come  
 from far,  
 Sounding through Christian lands her  
 trumpet, roused

Peasant and king; when boys and youths,  
 the growth

Of ragged villages and crazy huts, 465  
 Forsook their homes, and, errant in the  
 quest

Of Patron, famous school or friendly nook,  
 Where, pensioned, they in shelter might  
 sit down,

From town to town and through wide  
 scattered realms

Journeyed with ponderous folios in their  
 hands; 470

And often, starting from some covert place,  
 Saluted the chance comer on the road,  
 Crying, "An obolus, a penny give  
 To a poor scholar!"—when illustrious  
 men,  
 Lovers of truth, by penury constrained,  
 Bucer, Erasmus, or Melancthon, read 476  
 Before the doors or windows of their cells  
 By moonshine through mere lack of taper  
 light.

But peace to vain regrets! We see but  
 darkly  
 Even when we look behind us, and best  
 things 480  
 Are not so pure by nature that they needs  
 Must keep to all, as fondly all believe,  
 Their highest promise. If the mariner,  
 When at reluctant distance he hath  
 passed  
 Some tempting island, could but know  
 the ills 485  
 That must have fallen upon him had he  
 brought  
 His bark to land upon the wished-for  
 shore,  
 Good cause would oft be his to thank the  
 surf  
 Whose white belt scared him thence, or  
 wind that blew  
 Inexorably adverse: for myself 490  
 I grieve not; happy is the gown'd youth,  
 Who only misses what I missed, who falls  
 No lower than I fell.

I did not love,  
 Judging not ill perhaps, the timid  
 course  
 Of our scholastic studies; could have  
 wished 495  
 To see the river flow with ampler range  
 And freer pace; but more, far more, I  
 grieved  
 To see displayed among an eager few,  
 Who in the field of contest persevered,  
 Passions unworthy of youth's generous  
 heart 500  
 And mounting spirit, pitiably repaid,  
 When so disturbed, whatever palms are  
 won.  
 From these I turned to travel with the  
 shoal

Of more unthinking natures, easy minds  
 And pillowy; yet not wanting love that  
 makes 505  
 The day pass lightly on, when foresight  
 sleeps,  
 And wisdom and the pledges inter-  
 changed  
 With our own inner being are forgot.

Yet was this deep vacation not given up  
 To utter waste. Hitherto I had stood 510  
 In my own mind remote from social life,  
 (At least from what we commonly so  
 name,)  
 Like a lone shepherd on a promontory  
 Who lacking occupation looks far forth  
 Into the boundless sea, and rather makes  
 Than finds what he beholds. And sure  
 it is, 516  
 That this first transit from the smooth  
 delights  
 And wild outlandish walks of simple  
 youth  
 To something that resembles an approach  
 Towards human business, to a privileged  
 world 520  
 Within a world, a midway residence  
 With all its intervenient imagery,  
 Did better suit my visionary mind,  
 Far better, than to have been bolted  
 forth, 524  
 Thrust out abruptly into Fortune's way  
 Among the conflicts of substantial life;  
 By a more just gradation did lead on  
 To higher things; more naturally ma-  
 tured,  
 For permanent possession, better fruits,  
 Whether of truth or virtue, to ensue. 530  
 In serious mood, but oftener, I confess,  
 With playful zest of fancy, did we note  
 (How could we less?) the manners and the  
 ways  
 Of those who lived distinguished by the  
 badge  
 Of good or ill report; or those with whom  
 By frame of Academic discipline 536  
 We were perforce connected, men whose  
 sway  
 And known authority of office served  
 To set our minds on edge, and did no  
 more.

Nor wanted we rich pastime of this  
kind, 540  
Found everywhere, but chiefly in the  
ring  
Of the grave Elders, men unsoured,  
grotesque  
In character, tricked out like aged trees  
Which through the lapse of their in-  
firmity  
Give ready place to any random seed 545  
That chooses to be reared upon their  
trunks.

Here on my view, confronting vividly  
Those shepherd swains whom I had lately  
left,

Appeared a different aspect of old age;  
How different! yet both distinctly  
marked, 550

Objects embossed to catch the general  
eye,

Or portraitures for special use designed,  
As some might seem, so aptly do they  
serve

To illustrate Nature's book of rudiments—  
That book upheld as with maternal care

When she would enter on her tender  
scheme 556

Of teaching comprehension with delight,  
And mingling playful with pathetic  
thoughts.

The surfaces of artificial life  
And manners finely wrought, the delicate  
race 560

Of colours, lurking, gleaming up and  
down

Through that state arras woven with silk  
and gold;

This wily interchange of snaky hues,  
Willingly or unwillingly revealed,

I neither knew nor cared for; and as  
such 565

Were wanting here, I took what might be  
found

Of less elaborate fabric. At this day  
I smite, in many a mountain solitude  
Conjuring up scenes as obsolete in freaks  
Of character, in points of wit as broad, 570  
As aught by wooden images performed  
For entertainment of the gaping crowd  
At wake or fair. And oftentimes do flit

Remembrances before me of old men—  
Old humourists, who have been long in  
their graves, 575  
And having almost in my mind put off  
Their human names, have into phantoms  
passed  
Of texture midway between life and  
books.

I play the loiterer: 'tis enough to note  
That here in dwarf proportions were  
expressed 580

The limbs of the great world; its eager  
strifes

Collaterally pourtrayed, as in mock fight,  
A tournament of blows, some hardly dealt  
Though short of mortal combat; and  
whate'er 584

Might in this pageant be supposed to hit  
An artless rustic's notice, this way less,  
More that way, was not wasted upon  
me—

And yet the spectacle may well demand  
A more substantial name, no mimic  
show,

Itself a living part of a live whole, 590  
A creek in the vast sea; for, all degrees  
And shapes of spurious fame and short-  
lived praise

Here sate in state, and fed with daily  
alms

Retainers won away from solid good;  
And here was Labour, his own bond-  
slave; Hope, 595  
That never set the pains against the  
prize;

Idleness halting with his weary clog,  
And poor misguided Shame, and witless  
Fear,

And simple Pleasure foraging for Death;  
Honour misplaced, and Dignity astray;  
Feuds, factions, flatteries, enmity, and  
guile 601

Murmuring submission, and bald govern-  
ment,

(The idol weak as the idolater),  
And Decency and Custom starving Truth,  
And blind Authority beating with his  
staff 605

The child that might have led him;  
Emptiness

Followed as of good omen, and meek  
Worth  
Left to herself unheard of and unknown.

Of these and other kindred notices  
I cannot say what portion is in truth 610  
The naked recollection of that time,  
And what may rather have been called to  
life

By after-meditation. But delight  
That, in an easy temper lulled asleep,  
Is still with Innocence its own reward, 615  
This was not wanting. Carelessly I  
roamed

As through a wide museum from whose  
stores

A casual rarity is singled out  
And has its brief perusal, then gives way  
To others, all supplanted in their turn ;

Till 'mid this crowded neighbourhood of  
things 621

That are by nature most unneighbourly,  
The head turns round and cannot right  
itself ;

And though an aching and a barren sense  
Of gay confusion still be uppermost, 625  
With few wise longings and but little love,  
Yet to the memory something cleaves at  
last,

Whence profit may be drawn in times to  
come.

Thus in submissive idleness, my Friend !  
The labouring time of autumn, winter,  
spring, 630  
Eight months ! rolled pleasingly away ;  
the ninth  
Came and returned me to my native hills.

## BOOK FOURTH.

### SUMMER VACATION.

BRIGHT was the summer's noon when  
quickenings steps

Followed each other till a dreary moor  
Was crossed, a bare ridge clomb, upon  
whose top

Standing alone, as from a rampart's edge,  
I overlooked the bed of Windermere, 5

Like a vast river, stretching in the sun.  
With exultation, at my feet I saw

Lake, islands, promontories, gleaming  
bays,

A universe of Nature's fairest forms  
Proudly revealed with instantaneous

burst, 10  
Magnificent, and beautiful, and gay.

I bounded down the hill shouting amain  
For the old Ferryman ; to the shout the  
rocks

Replied, and when the Charon of the  
flood

Had staid his oars, and touched the  
jutting pier, 15

I did not step into the well-known boat

Without a cordial greeting. Thence with  
speed

Up the familiar hill I took my way  
Towards that sweet Valley<sup>1</sup> where I had  
been reared ;

'Twas but a short hour's walk, ere veering  
round 20

I saw the snow-white church upon her hill  
Sit like a thronèd Lady, sending out

A gracious look all over her domain.  
Yon azure smoke betrays the lurking

town ;

With eager footsteps I advance and reach  
The cottage threshold where my journey

closed. 25  
Glad welcome had I, with some tears,  
perhaps,

From my old Dame, so kind and motherly,  
While she perused me with a parent's  
pride.

The thoughts of gratitude shall fall like dew

<sup>1</sup> Hawkshead.

Upon thy grave, good creature! While  
my heart 31

Can beat never will I forget thy name.  
Heaven's blessing be upon thee where  
thou liest

After thy innocent and busy stir  
In narrow cares, thy little daily growth 35  
Of calm enjoyments, after eighty years,  
And more than eighty, of untroubled life,  
Childless, yet by the strangers to thy  
blood

Honoured with little less than filial love.  
What joy was mine to see thee once  
again, 40

Thee and thy dwelling, and a crowd of  
things

About its narrow precincts all beloved,  
And many of them seeming yet my own!  
Why should I speak of what a thousand  
hearts

Have felt, and every man alive can  
guess? 45

The rooms, the court, the garden were not  
left

Long unsaluted, nor the sunny seat  
Round the stone table under the dark  
pine,

Friendly to studious or to festive hours;  
Nor that unruly child of mountain birth,  
The famous brook, who, soon as he was  
boxed 51

Within our garden, found himself at once,  
As if by trick insidious and unkind,  
Stripped of his voice and left to dimple  
down

(Without an effort and without a will) 55  
A channel paved by man's officious care.

I looked at him and smiled, and smiled  
again,

And in the press of twenty thousand  
thoughts,

"Ha," quoth I, "pretty prisoner, are you  
there!"

Well might sarcastic Fancy then have  
whispered, 60

"An emblem here behold of thy own life;  
In its late course of even days with all  
Their smooth enthrallment;" but the  
heart was full,

Too full for that reproach. My aged  
Dame

Walked proudly at my side: she guided  
me; 65

I willing, nay—nay, wishing to be led.  
—The face of every neighbour whom  
I met

Was like a volume to me; some were  
hailed

Upon the road, some busy at their work,  
Unceremonious greetings interchanged  
With half the length of a long field  
between. 71

Among my schoolfellows I scattered  
round

Like recognitions, but with some con-  
straint

Attended, doubtless, with a little pride,  
But with more shame, for my habi-  
ments, 75

The transformation wrought by gay  
attire.

Not less delighted did I take my place  
At our domestic table: and, dear Friend!

In this endeavour simply to relate  
A Poet's history, may I leave untold 80

The thankfulness with which I laid me  
down

In my accustomed bed, more welcome  
now

Perhaps than if it had been more desired  
Or been more often thought of with  
regret;

That lowly bed whence I had heard the  
wind 85

Roar, and the rain beat hard; where I so  
oft

Had lain awake on summer nights to  
watch

The moon in splendour couched among  
the leaves

Of a tall ash, that near our cottage stood;  
Had watched her with fixed eyes while to  
and fro 90

In the dark summit of the waving tree  
She rocked with every impulse of the  
breeze.

Among the favourites whom it pleased  
me well

To see again, was one by ancient right  
Our inmate, a rough terrier of the hills; 95  
By birth and call of nature pre-ordained

To hunt the badger and unearth the fox  
Among the impervious crags, but having  
been

From youth our own adopted, he had  
passed 99

Into a gentler service. And when first  
The boyish spirit flagged, and day by day  
Along my veins I kindled with the stir,  
The fermentation, and the vernal heat  
Of poesy, affecting private shades  
Like a sick Lover, then this dog was  
used 105

To watch me, an attendant and a friend,  
Obsequious to my steps early and late,  
Though often of such dilatory walk  
Tired, and uneasy at the halts I made.

A hundred times when, roving high and  
low, 110

I have been harassed with the toil of  
verse,

Much pains and little progress, and at  
once

Some lovely Image in the song rose up  
Full-formed, like Venus rising from the  
sea; 114

Then have I darted forwards to let loose  
My hand upon his back with stormy joy,  
Caressing him again and yet again.

And when at evening on the public way  
I sauntered, like a river murmuring  
And talking to itself when all things  
else 120

Are still, the creature trotted on before;  
Such was his custom; but whene'er he  
met

A passenger approaching, he would turn  
To give me timely notice, and straight-  
way,

Grateful for that admonishment, I hushed  
My voice, composed my gait, and, with  
the air 126

And mien of one whose thoughts are free,  
advanced

To give and take a greeting that might  
save

My name from piteous rumours, such as  
wait

On men suspected to be crazed in brain.

Those walks well worthy to be prized  
and loved— 131

Regretted!—that word, too, was on my  
tongue,

But they were richly laden with all good,  
And cannot be remembered but with  
thanks

And gratitude, and perfect joy of heart—  
Those walks in all their freshness now  
came back 136

Like a returning Spring. When first I  
made

Once more the circuit of our little lake,  
If ever happiness hath lodged with man,  
That day consummate happiness was  
mine, 140

Wide-spreading, steady, calm, contem-  
plative.

The sun was set, or setting, when I left  
Our cottage door, and evening soon  
brought on

A sober hour, not winning or serene,  
For cold and raw the air was, and un-  
tuned; 145

But as a face we love is sweetest then  
When sorrow damps it, or, whatever look  
It chance to wear, is sweetest if the heart

Have fulness in herself; even so with me  
It fared that evening. Gently did my  
soul 150

Put off her veil, and, self-transmuted,  
stood

Naked, as in the presence of her God.  
While on I walked, a comfort seemed to  
touch

A heart that had not been disconsolate:  
Strength came where weakness was not  
known to be, 155

At least not felt; and restoration came  
Like an intruder knocking at the door  
Of unacknowledged weariness. I took  
The balance, and with firmhand weighed  
myself.

—Of that external scene which round me  
lay, 160

Little, in this abstraction, did I see;  
Remembered less; but I had inward  
hopes

And swellings of the spirit, was rapt and  
soothed,

Conversed with promises, had glimmer-  
ing views 164

How life pervades the undecaying mind;

How the immortal soul with God-like  
power

Informs, creates, and thaws the deepest  
sleep

That time can lay upon her; how on  
earth

Man, if he do but live within the light  
Of high endeavours, daily spreads abroad  
His being armed with strength that can-  
not fail. 171

Nor was there want of milder thoughts,  
of love,

Of innocence, and holiday repose;  
And more than pastoral quiet, 'mid the  
stir 174

Of boldest projects, and a peaceful end  
At last, or glorious, by endurance won.

Thus musing, in a wood I sate me down  
Alone, continuing there to muse: the  
slopes

And heights meanwhile were slowly over-  
spread

With darkness, and before a rippling  
breeze 180

The long lake lengthened out its hoary  
line,

And in the sheltered coppice where I  
sate,

Around me from among the hazel leaves,  
Now here, now there, moved by the  
straggling wind, 184

Came ever and anon a breath-like sound,  
Quick as the pantings of the faithful dog,  
The off and on companion of my walk;  
And such, at times, believing them to be,  
I turned my head to look if he were  
there;

Then into solemn thought I passed once  
more. 190

A freshness also found I at this time  
In human Life, the daily life of those  
Whose occupations really I loved;

The peaceful scene oft filled me with  
surprise

Changed like a garden in the heat of  
spring, 195

After an eight-days' absence. For (to  
omit

The things which were the same and yet  
appeared

Far otherwise) amid this rural solitude,  
A narrow Vale where each was known to  
all,

'Twas not indifferent to a youthful mind  
To mark some sheltering bower or sunny  
nook, 201

Where an old man had used to sit alone,  
Now vacant; pale-faced babes whom I  
had left

In arms, now rosy prattlers at the feet  
Of a pleased grandame tottering up and  
down; 205

And growing girls whose beauty, filched  
away

With all its pleasant promises, was gone  
To deck some slighted playmate's homely  
cheek.

Yes, I had something of a subtler sense,  
And often looking round was moved to  
smiles 210

Such as a delicate work of humour breeds;  
I read, without design, the opinions,  
thoughts,

Of those plain-living people now observed  
With clearer knowledge; with another  
eye

I saw the quiet woodman in the woods,  
The shepherd roam the hills. With new  
delight, 216

This chiefly, did I note my grey-haired  
Dame;

Saw her go forth to church or other work  
Of state, equipped in monumental trim;  
Short velvet cloak, (her bonnet of the  
like), 220

A mantle such as Spanish Cavaliers  
Wore in old time. Her smooth domestic  
life,

Affectionate without disquietude,  
Her talk, her business, pleased me; and  
no less

Her clear though shallow stream of piety  
That ran on Sabbath days a fresher  
course; 226

With thoughts unfelt till now I saw her  
read

Her Bible on hot Sunday afternoons,  
And loved the book, when she had  
dropped asleep

And made of it a pillow for her head. 230

Nor less do I remember to have felt,  
 Distinctly manifested at this time,  
 A human-heartedness about my love  
 For objects hitherto the absolute wealth  
 Of my own private being and no more ;  
 Which I had loved, even as a blessed  
     spirit 236  
 Or Angel, if he were to dwell on earth,  
 Might love in individual happiness.  
 But now there opened on me other  
     thoughts  
 Of change, congratulation or regret, 240  
 A pensive feeling ! It spread far and  
     wide ;  
 The trees, the mountains shared it, and  
     the brooks,  
 The stars of Heaven, now seen in their  
     old haunts—  
 White Sirius glittering o'er the southern  
     crag,  
 Orion with his belt, and those fair Seven,  
 Acquaintances of every little child, 246  
 And Jupiter, my own beloved star !  
 Whatever shadings of mortality,  
 Whatever imports from the world of  
     death  
 Had come among these objects here-  
     tofore, 250  
 Were, in the main, of mood less tender :  
     strong,  
 Deep, gloomy were they, and severe ;  
     the scatterings  
 Of awe or tremulous dread, that had  
     given way  
 In later youth to yearnings of a love  
 Enthusiastic, to delight and hope. 255

As one who hangs down-bending from  
     the side  
 Of a slow-moving boat, upon the breast  
 Of a still water, solacing himself  
 With such discoveries as his eye can  
     make  
 Beneath him in the bottom of the deep,  
 Sees many beauteous sights—weeds, fishes,  
     flowers, 261  
 Grots, pebbles, roots of trees, and fancies  
     more,  
 Yet often is perplexed and cannot part  
 The shadow from the substance, rocks  
     and sky,

Mountains and clouds, reflected in the  
     depth 265  
 Of the clear flood, from things which  
     there abide  
 In their true dwelling ; now is crossed by  
     gleam  
 Of his own image, by a sunbeam now,  
 And wavering motions sent he knows not  
     whence,  
 Impediments that make his task more  
     sweet ; 270  
 Such pleasant office have we long pursued  
 Incumbent o'er the surface of past time  
 With like success, nor often have ap-  
     peared  
 Shapes fairer or less doubtfully discerned  
 Than these to which the Tale, indulgent  
     Friend ! 275  
 Would now direct thy notice. Yet in  
     spite  
 Of pleasure won, and knowledge not  
     withheld,  
 There was an inner falling off—I loved,  
 Loved deeply all that had been loved  
     before,  
 More deeply even than ever : but a  
     swarm 280  
 Of heady schemes jostling each other,  
     gawds,  
 And feast and dance, and public revelry,  
 And sports and games (too grateful in  
     themselves,  
 Yet in themselves less grateful, I believe,  
 Than as they were a badge glossy and  
     fresh 285  
 Of manliness and freedom) all conspired  
 To lure my mind from firm habitual  
     quest  
 Of feeding pleasures, to depress the zeal  
 And damp those yearnings which had  
     once been mine—  
 A wild, unworldly-minded youth, given  
     up 290  
 To his own eager thoughts. It would  
     demand  
 Some skill, and longer time than may be  
     spared,  
 To paint these vanities, and how they  
     wrought  
 In haunts where they, till now, had been  
     unknown.

It seemed the very garments that I wore  
 Preyed on my strength, and stopped the  
 quiet stream 296  
 Of self-forgetfulness.

Yes, that heartless chase  
 Of trivial pleasures was a poor exchange  
 For books and nature at that early age.  
 'Tis true, some casual knowledge might  
 be gained 300  
 Of character or life; but at that time,  
 Of manners put to school I took small  
 note,  
 And all my deeper passions lay else-  
 where.

Far better had it been to exalt the mind  
 By solitary study, to uphold 305  
 Intense desire through meditative peace;  
 And yet, for chastisement of these re-  
 grets,

The memory of one particular hour  
 Doth here rise up against me. 'Mid a  
 throng

Of maids and youths, old men, and  
 matrons staid, 310

A medley of all tempers, I had passed  
 The night in dancing, gaiety, and mirth,  
 With din of instruments and shuffling  
 feet,

And glancing forms, and tapers glittering,  
 And unaimed prattle flying up and down;  
 Spirits upon the stretch, and here and  
 there 316

Slight shocks of young love-liking inter-  
 spersed,

Whose transient pleasure mounted to the  
 head,

And tingled through the veins. Ere we  
 retired,

The cock had crowed, and now the  
 eastern sky 320

Was kindling, not unseen, from humble  
 copse

And open field, through which the path-  
 way wound,

And homeward led my steps. Magni-  
 ficent

The morning rose, in memorable pomp,  
 Glorious as e'er I had beheld—in front,  
 The sea lay laughing at a distance; near,  
 The solid mountains shone, bright as the  
 clouds, 327

Grain-tinctured, drenched in empyrean  
 light;

And in the meadows and the lower  
 grounds

Was all the sweetness of a common  
 dawn— 330

Dews, vapours, and the melody of birds,  
 And labourers going forth to till the  
 fields.

Ah! need I say, dear Friend! that to  
 the brim

My heart was full; I made no vows, but  
 vows

Were then made for me; bond unknown  
 to me 335

Was given, that I should be, else sinning  
 greatly,

A dedicated Spirit. On I walked  
 In thankful blessedness, which yet sur-  
 vives.

Strange rendezvous! My mind was at  
 that time

A parti-coloured show of grave and gay,  
 Solid and light, short-sighted and pro-  
 found; 341

Of inconsiderate habits and sedate,  
 Consorting in one mansion unreprieved.

The worth I knew of powers that I  
 possessed,

Though slighted and too oft misused.  
 Besides, 345

That summer, swarming as it did with  
 thoughts

Transient and idle, lacked not intervals  
 When Folly from the frown of fleeting Time

Shrunk, and the mind experienced in  
 herself

Conformity as just as that of old 350  
 To the end and written spirit of God's

works,

Whether held forth in Nature or in Man,  
 Through pregnant vision, separate or  
 conjoined.

When from our better selves we have  
 too long

Been parted by the hurrying world, and  
 droop, 355

Sick of its business, of its pleasures tired,  
 How gracious, how benign, is Solitude;

How potent a mere image of her sway;  
Most potent when impressed upon the  
mind

With an appropriate human centre—  
hermit, 360

Deep in the bosom of the wilderness;  
Votary (in vast cathedral, where no foot  
Is treading, where no other face is seen)  
Kneeling at prayers; or watchman on  
the top 364

Of lighthouse, beaten by Atlantic waves;  
Or as the soul of that great Power is met  
Sometimes embodied on a public road,  
When, for the night deserted, it assumes  
A character of quiet more profound  
Than pathless wastes.

Once, when those summer  
months 370

Were flown, and autumn brought its  
annual show

Of oars with oars contending, sails with  
sails,

Upon Winander's spacious breast, it  
chanced

That—after I had left a flower-decked  
room

(Whose in-door pastime, lighted up, sur-  
vived 375

To a late hour), and spirits overwrought  
Were making night do penance for a day  
Spent in a round of strenuous idleness—  
My homeward course led up a long  
ascent,

Where the road's watery surface, to the  
top 380

Of that sharp rising, glittered to the moon  
And bore the semblance of another stream  
Stealing with silent lapse to join the  
brook

That murmured in the vale. All else  
was still;

No living thing appeared in earth or air,  
And, save the flowing water's peaceful  
voice, 386

Sound there was none—but, lo! an un-  
couth shape,

Shown by a sudden turning of the road,  
So near that, slipping back into the shade  
Of a thick hawthorn, I could mark him  
well, 390

Myself unseen. He was of stature tall,

A span above man's common measure,  
tall,

Stiff, lank, and upright; a more meagre  
man

Was never seen before by night or day.

Long were his arms, pallid his hands;  
his mouth 395

Looked ghastly in the moonlight: from  
behind,

A mile-stone propped him; I could also  
ken

That he was clothed in military garb,  
Though faded, yet entire. Companion-  
less, 399

No dog attending, by no staff sustained,  
He stood, and in his very dress appeared  
A desolation, a simplicity,

To which the trappings of a gaudy world  
Make a strange back-ground. From his  
lips, ere long,

Issued low muttered sounds, as if of pain  
Or some uneasy thought; yet still his  
form 406

Kept the same awful steadiness—at his  
feet

His shadow lay, and moved not. From  
self-blame

Not wholly free, I watched him thus; at  
length 409

Subduing my heart's specious cowardice,  
I left the shady nook where I had stood  
And hailed him. Slowly from his resting-  
place

He rose, and with a lean and wasted arm  
In measured gesture lifted to his head

Returned my salutation; then resumed  
His station as before; and when I asked  
His history, the veteran, in reply, 417

Was neither slow nor eager; but, un-  
moved, 420

And with a quiet uncomplaining voice,  
A stately air of mild indifference, 420

He told in few plain words a soldier's  
tale—

That in the Tropic Islands he had served,  
Whence he had landed scarcely three  
weeks past;

That on his landing he had been dis-  
missed,

And now was travelling towards his  
native home. 425

This heard, I said, in pity, "Come with me."

He stooped, and straightway from the ground took up

An oaken staff by me yet unobserved—  
A staff which must have dropt from his slack hand

And lay till now neglected in the grass.  
Though weak his step and cautious, he appeared 431

To travel without pain, and I beheld,  
With an astonishment but ill suppressed,  
His ghostly figure moving at my side;  
Nor could I, while we journeyed thus, forbear 435

To turn from present hardships to the past,

And speak of war, battle, and pestilence,  
Sprinkling this talk with questions, better spared,

On what he might himself have seen or felt. 439

He all the while was in demeanour calm,  
Concise in answer; solemn and sublime  
He might have seemed, but that in all he said

There was a strange half-absence, as of one

Knowing too well the importance of his theme, 444

But feeling it no longer. Our discourse  
Soon ended, and together on we passed  
In silence through a wood gloomy and still.

Up-turning, then, along an open field,  
We reached a cottage. At the door I knocked,

And earnestly to charitable care 450  
Commended him as a poor friendless man,

Belated and by sickness overcome.  
Assured that now the traveller would repose

In comfort, I entreated that henceforth  
He would not linger in the public ways,  
But ask for timely furtherance and help  
Such as his state required. At this re-  
proof, 457

With the same ghastly mildness in his look,

He said, "My trust is in the God of Heaven,

And in the eye of him who passes me!"

The cottage door was speedily unbarred, 461

And now the soldier touched his hat once more

With his lean hand, and in a faltering voice,

Whose tone bespoke reviving interests  
Till then unfelt, he thanked me; I returned 465

The farewell blessing of the patient man,  
And so we parted. Back I cast a look,  
And lingered near the door a little space,  
Then sought with quiet heart my distant home.

## BOOK FIFTH.

### BOOKS.

WHEN Contemplation, like the night-calm felt

Through earth and sky, spreads widely,  
and sends deep

Into the soul its tranquillising power,  
Even then I sometimes grieve for thee,  
O Man,

Earth's paramount Creature! not so much  
for woes 5

That thou endurest; heavy though that weight be,

Cloud-like it mounts, or touched with light divine

Doth melt away; but for those palms achieved,

Throughlength of time, by patient exercise  
Of study and hard thought; there, there,  
it is 10

That sadness finds its fuel. Hitherto,  
 In progress through this Verse, my mind  
   hath looked  
 Upon the speaking face of earth and  
   heaven  
 As her prime teacher, intercourse with  
   man  
 Established by the sovereign Intellect, 15  
 Who through that bodily image hath  
   diffused,  
 As might appear to the eye of fleeting  
   time,  
 A deathless spirit. Thou also, man! hast  
   wrought,  
 For commerce of thy nature with herself,  
 Things that aspire to unconquerable life;  
 And yet we feel—we cannot choose but  
   feel— 21  
 That they must perish. Tremblings of  
   the heart  
 It gives, to think that our immortal  
   being  
 No more shall need such garments; and  
   yet man,  
 As long as he shall be the child of earth,  
 Might almost “weep to have” what he  
   may lose, 26  
 Nor be himself extinguished, but survive,  
 Abject, depressed, forlorn, disconsolate.  
 A thought is with me sometimes, and I  
   say,—  
 Should the whole frame of earth by in-  
   ward throes 30  
 Be wrenched, or fire come down from far  
   to scorch  
 Her pleasant habitations, and dry up  
 Old Ocean, in his bed left singed and bare,  
 Yet would the living Presence still sub-  
   sist  
 Victorious, and composure would ensue,  
 And kindlings like the morning—presage  
   sure 36  
 Of day returning and of life revived.  
 But all the meditations of mankind,  
 Yea, all the adamantine holds of truth  
 By reason built, or passion, which itself 40  
 Is highest reason in a soul sublime;  
 The consecrated works of Bard and Sage,  
 Sensuous or intellectual, wrought by men,  
 Twin labourers and heirs of the same  
   hopes;

Where would they be? Oh! why hath  
   not the Mind 45  
 Some element to stamp her image on  
 In nature somewhat nearer to her own?  
 Why, gifted with such powers to send  
   abroad  
 Her spirit, must it lodge in shrines so  
   frail?  
  
 One day, when from my lips a like  
   complaint 50  
 Had fallen in presence of a studious  
   friend,  
 He with a smile made answer, that in truth  
 ’Twas going far to seek disquietude;  
 But on the front of his reproof confessed  
 That he himself had oftentimes given  
   way 55  
 To kindred hauntings. Whereupon I  
   told,  
 That once in the stillness of a summer’s  
   noon,  
 While I was seated in a rocky cave  
 By the sea-side, perusing, so it chanced,  
 The famous history of the errant knight  
 Recorded by Cervantes, these same  
   thoughts 61  
 Beset me, and to height unusual rose,  
 While listlessly I sate, and, having closed  
 The book, had turned my eyes toward  
   the wide sea.  
 On poetry and geometric truth, 65  
 And their high privilege of lasting life,  
 From all internal injury exempt,  
 I mused; upon these chiefly: and at  
   length,  
 My senses yielding to the sultry air,  
 Sleep seized me, and I passed into a  
   dream. 70  
 I saw before me stretched a boundless  
   plain  
 Of sandy wilderness, all black and void,  
 And as I looked around, distress and fear  
 Came creeping over me, when at my side,  
 Close at my side, an uncouth shape  
   appeared 75  
 Upon a dromedary, mounted high,  
 He seemed an Arab of the Bedouin  
   tribes:  
 A lance he bore, and underneath one arm  
 A stone, and in the opposite hand a shell

Of a surpassing brightness. At the sight  
Much I rejoiced, not doubting but a  
guide 81

Was present, one who with unerring skill  
Would through the desert lead me; and  
while yet

I looked and looked, self-questioned what  
this freight

Which the new-comer carried through  
the waste 85

Could mean, the Arab told me that the  
stone

(To give it in the language of the dream)  
Was "Euclid's Elements;" and "This,"

said he,  
"Is something of more worth;" and at  
the word

Stretched forth the shell, so beautiful in  
shape, 90

In colour so resplendent, with command  
That I should hold it to my ear. I did so,

And heard that instant in an unknown  
tongue,

Which yet I understood, articulate sounds,  
A loud prophetic blast of harmony; 95

An Ode, in passion uttered, which fore-  
told

Destruction to the children of the earth  
By deluge, now at hand. No sooner  
ceased

The song, than the Arab with calm look  
declared

That all would come to pass of which the  
voice 100

Had given forewarning, and that he  
himself

Was going then to bury those two books:  
The one that held acquaintance with the  
stars,

And wedded soul to soul in purest bond  
Of reason, undisturbed by space or time;

The other that was a god, yea many  
gods, 106

Had voices more than all the winds, with  
power

To exhilarate the spirit, and to soothe,  
Through every clime, the heart of human  
kind.

While this was uttering, strange as it  
may seem, 110

I wondered not, although I plainly saw

The one to be a stone, the other a shell:  
Nor doubted once but that they both  
were books,

Having a perfect faith in all that passed.  
Far stronger, now, grew the desire I felt

To cleave unto this man; but when I  
prayed 116

To share his enterprise, he hurried on  
Reckless of me: I followed, not unseen,

For oftentimes he cast a backward look,  
Grasping his twofold treasure.—Lance in  
rest, 120

He rode, I keeping pace with him; and  
now

He, to my fancy, had become the knight  
Whose tale Cervantes tells; yet not the  
knight,

But was an Arab of the desert too;  
Of these was neither, and was both at  
once. 125

His countenance, meanwhile, grew more  
disturbed;

And, looking backwards when he looked,  
mine eyes

Saw, over half the wilderness diffused,  
A bed of glittering light: I asked the  
cause:

"It is," said he, "the waters of the deep  
Gathering upon us;" quickening then  
the pace 131

Of the unwieldy creature he bestrode,  
He left me: I called after him aloud;

He heeded not; but, with his twofold  
charge 134

Still in his grasp, before me, full in view,  
Went hurrying o'er the illimitable waste,

With the fleet waters of a drowning  
world

In chase of him; whereat I waked in  
terror,

And saw the sea before me, and the book,  
In which I had been reading, at my side.

Full often, taking from the world of  
sleep 141

This Arab phantom, which I thus beheld,  
This semi-Quixote, I to him have given

A substance, fancied him a living man,  
A gentle dweller in the desert, crazed 145

By love and feeling, and internal thought  
Protracted among endless solitudes;

Have shaped him wandering upon this  
quest!

Nor have I pitied him; but rather felt  
Reverence was due to a being thus em-  
ployed; 150

And thought that, in the blind and awful  
lair

Of such a madness, reason did lie couched.  
Enow there are on earth to take in charge  
Their wives, their children, and their  
virgin loves,

Or whatsoever else the heart holds dear;  
Enow to stir for these; yea, will I say, 156  
Contemplating in soberness the approach  
Of an event so dire, by signs in earth  
Or heaven made manifest, that I could  
share

That maniac's fond anxiety, and go 160  
Upon like errand. Oftentimes at least  
Me hath such strong entrancement over-  
come,

When I have held a volume in my hand,  
Poor earthly casket of immortal verse,  
Shakespeare, or Milton, labourers divine!

Great and benign, indeed, must be the  
power 166  
Of living nature, which could thus so  
long

Detain me from the best of other guides  
And dearest helpers, left unthanked, un-  
praised.

Even in the time of lisping infancy, 170  
And later down, in prattling childhood  
even,

While I was travelling back among those  
days,

How could I ever play an ingrate's part?  
Once more should I have made those  
bowers resound,

By intermingling strains of thankfulness  
With their own thoughtless melodies; at  
least 176

It might have well beseeemed me to repeat  
Some simply fashioned tale, to tell again,  
In slender accents of sweet verse, some tale  
That did bewitch me then, and soothes  
me now. 180

O Friend! O Poet! brother of my soul,  
Think not that I could pass along un-  
touched

By these remembrances. Yet wherefore  
speak?

Why call upon a few weak words to say  
What is already written in the hearts 185  
Of all that breathe?—what in the path of  
all

Drops daily from the tongue of every  
child,

Wherever man is found? The trickling  
tear

Upon the cheek of listening Infancy  
Proclaims it, and the insuperable look 190  
That drinks as if it never could be full.

That portion of my story I shall leave  
There registered: whatever else of power  
Or pleasure sown, or fostered thus, may be  
Peculiar to myself, let that remain 195  
Where still it works, though hidden from  
all search

Among the depths of time. Yet is it just  
That here, in memory of all books which  
lay

Their sure foundations in the heart of  
man,

Whether by native prose, or numerous  
verse, 200

That in the name of all inspired souls—  
From Homer the great Thunderer, from  
the voice

That roars along the bed of Jewish song,  
And that more varied and elaborate,

Those trumpet-tones of harmony that  
shake 205

Our shores in England,—from those  
loftiest notes

Down to the low and wren-like warblings,  
made

For cottagers and spinners at the wheel,  
And sun-burnt traveller\* resting their  
tired limbs,

Stretched under wayside hedge-rows,  
ballad tunes, 210

Food for the hungry ears of little ones,  
And of old men who have survived their  
joys—

'Tis just that in behalf of these, the works,  
And of the men that framed them,  
whether known,

Or sleeping nameless in their scattered  
graves, 215

That I should here assert their rights,  
 attest  
 Their honours, and should, once for all,  
 pronounce  
 Their benediction; speak of them as  
 Powers  
 For ever to be hallowed; only less,  
 For what we are and what we may  
 become, 220  
 Than Nature's self, which is the breath of  
 God,  
 Or His pure Word by miracle revealed.

Rarely and with reluctance would I  
 stoop  
 To transitory themes; yet I rejoice,  
 And, by these thoughts admonished, will  
 pour out 225  
 Thanks with uplifted heart, that I was  
 reared  
 Safe from an evil which these days have  
 laid  
 Upon the children of the land, a pest  
 That might have dried me up, body and  
 soul.  
 This verse is dedicate to Nature's self, 230  
 And things that teach as Nature teaches:  
 then,  
 Oh! where had been the Man, the Poet  
 where,  
 Where had we been, we two, beloved  
 Friend!  
 If in the season of unperilous choice,  
 In lieu of wandering, as we did, through  
 vales 235  
 Rich with indigenous produce, open  
 ground  
 Of Fancy, happy pastures ranged at  
 will,  
 We had been followed, hourly watched,  
 and noosed,  
 Each in his several melancholy walk  
 Stringed like a poor man's heifer at its  
 feed, 240  
 Led through the lanes in forlorn servi-  
 tude;  
 Or rather like a stallèd ox debarred  
 From touch of growing grass, that may  
 not taste  
 A flower till it have yielded up its sweets  
 A prelibation to the mower's scythe. 245

Behold the parent hen amid her brood,  
 Though fledged and feathered, and well  
 pleased to part  
 And straggle from her presence, still a  
 brood,  
 And she herself from the maternal bond  
 Still undischarged; yet doth she little  
 more 250  
 Than move with them in tenderness and  
 love,  
 A centre to the circle which they make;  
 And now and then, alike from need of  
 theirs  
 And call of her own natural appetites,  
 She scratches, ransacks up the earth for  
 food, 255  
 Which they partake at pleasure. Early  
 died  
 My honoured Mother, she who was the  
 heart  
 And hinge of all our learnings and our  
 loves:  
 She left us destitute, and, as we might,  
 Trooping together. Little suits it me 260  
 To break upon the sabbath of her rest  
 With any thought that looks at others'  
 blame;  
 Nor would I praise her but in perfect love.  
 Hence am I checked: but let me boldly  
 say,  
 In gratitude, and for the sake of truth,  
 Unheard by her, that she, not falsely  
 taught, 265  
 Fetching her goodness rather from times  
 past,  
 Than shaping novelties for times to come,  
 Had no presumption, no such jealousy,  
 Nor did by habit of her thoughts mis-  
 trust 270  
 Our nature, but had virtual faith that He  
 Who fills the mother's breast with in-  
 nocent milk,  
 Doth also for our nobler part provide,  
 Under His great correction and control,  
 As innocent instincts, and as innocent  
 food; 275  
 Or draws for minds that are left free to  
 trust  
 In the simplicities of opening life  
 Sweet honey out of spurned or dreaded  
 weeds.

This was her creed, and therefore she was  
 pure  
 From anxious fear of error or mishap, 280  
 And evil, overweeningly so called ;  
 Was not puffed up by false unnatural  
 hopes,  
 Nor selfish with unnecessary cares,  
 Nor with impatience from the season  
 asked  
 More than its timely produce ; rather  
 loved 285  
 The hours for what they are, than from  
 regard  
 Glanced on their promises in restless  
 pride.  
 Such was she—not from faculties more  
 strong  
 Than others have, but from the times,  
 perhaps,  
 And spot in which she lived, and through  
 a grace 290  
 Of modest meekness, simple-mindedness,  
 A heart that found benignity and hope,  
 Being itself benign.  
 My drift I fear  
 Is scarcely obvious ; but, that common  
 sense  
 May try this modern system by its fruits,  
 Leave let me take to place before her  
 sight 295  
 A specimen pourtrayed with faithful  
 hand.  
 Full early trained to worship seemliness,  
 This model of a child is never known  
 To mix in quarrels ; that were far be-  
 neath 300  
 Its dignity ; with gifts he bubbles o'er  
 As generous as a fountain ; selfishness  
 May not come near him, nor the little  
 throng  
 Of fitting pleasures tempt him from his  
 path ;  
 The wandering beggars propagate his  
 name, 305  
 Dumb creatures find him tender as a nun,  
 And natural or supernatural fear,  
 Unless it leap upon him in a dream,  
 Touches him not. To enhance the wonder,  
 see  
 How arch his notices, how nice his sense  
 Of the ridiculous ; not blind is he 311

To the broad follies of the licensed world,  
 Yet innocent himself withal, though  
 shrewd,  
 And can read lectures upon innocence ;  
 A miracle of scientific lore, 315  
 Ships he can guide across the pathless  
 sea,  
 And tell you all their cunning ; he can  
 read  
 The inside of the earth, and spell the  
 stars ;  
 He knows the policies of foreign lands ;  
 Can string you names of districts, cities,  
 towns, 320  
 The whole world over, tight as beads of  
 dew  
 Upon a gossamer thread ; he sifts, he  
 weighs ;  
 All things are put to question ; he must  
 live  
 Knowing that he grows wiser every day  
 Or else not live at all, and seeing too 325  
 Each little drop of wisdom as it falls  
 Into the dimpling cistern of his heart :  
 For this unnatural growth the trainer  
 blame,  
 Pity the tree.—Poor human vanity,  
 Wert thou extinguished, little would be  
 left 330  
 Which he could truly love ; but how es-  
 cape ?  
 For, ever as a thought of purer birth  
 Rises to lead him toward a better clime,  
 Some intermeddler still is on the watch  
 To drive him back, and pound him, like  
 a stray, 335  
 Within the pinfold of his own conceit.  
 Meanwhile old grandame earth is grieved  
 to find  
 The playthings, which her love designed  
 for him,  
 Unthought of : in their woodland beds  
 the flowers 339  
 Weep, and the river sides are all forlorn.  
 Oh ! give us once again the wishing-cap  
 Of Fortunatus, and the invisible coat  
 Of Jack the Giant-killer, Robin Hood,  
 And Sabra in the forest with St. George !  
 The child, whose love is here, at least,  
 doth reap 345  
 One precious gain, that he forgets himself.

These mighty workmen of our later age,  
Who, with a broad highway, have over-  
bridged

The froward chaos of futurity,  
Tamed to their bidding; they who have  
the skill 350

To manage books, and things, and make  
them act

On infant minds as surely as the sun  
Deals with a flower; the keepers of our  
time,

The guides and wardens of our faculties,  
Sages who in their prescience would control  
All accidents, and to the very road 356

Which they have fashioned would confine  
us down,

Like engines; when will their presump-  
tion learn,

That in the unreasoning progress of the  
world

A wiser spirit is at work for us, 360

A better eye than theirs, most prodigal  
Of blessings, and most studious of our  
good,

Even in what seem our most unfruitful  
hours?

There was a Boy<sup>1</sup>: ye knew him well,  
ye cliffs 364

And islands of Winander!—many a time

At evening, when the earliest stars began

To move along the edges of the hills,

Rising or setting, would he stand alone

Beneath the trees or by the glimmering  
lake,

And there, with fingers interwoven, both  
hands 370

Pressed closely palm to palm, and to his  
mouth

Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,

Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls,

That they might answer him; and they  
would shout

Across the watery vale, and shout again,

Responsive to his call, with quivering  
peals, 376

And long halloos and screams, and echoes  
loud,

Redoubled and redoubled, concourse wild

Of jocund din; and, when a lengthened  
pause

Of silence came and baffled his best skill,

Then sometimes, in that silence while he  
hung 381

Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise

Has carried far into his heart the voice

Of mountain torrents; or the visible scene

Would enter unawares into his mind, 385

With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,

Its woods, and that uncertain heaven,

received

Into the bosom of the steady lake.

This Boy was taken from his mates,  
and died

In childhood, ere he was full twelve years  
old. 390

Fair is the spot, most beautiful the vale

Where he was born; the grassy church-  
yard hangs

Upon a slope above the village school,

And through that churchyard when my  
way has led 394

On summer evenings, I believe that there

A long half hour together I have stood

Mute, looking at the grave in which he  
lies!

Even now appears before the mind's clear  
eye

That self-same village church; I see her  
sit

(The thronèd Lady whom erewhile we  
hailed) 400

On her green hill, forgetful of this Boy

Who slumbers at her feet,—forgetful, too,

Of all her silent neighbourhood of graves,

And listening only to the gladsome sounds

That, from the rural school ascending,  
play 405

Beneath her and about her. May she long

Behold a race of young ones like to those

With whom I herded!—(easily, indeed,

We might have fed upon a fatter soil

Of arts and letters—but be that for-  
given)— 410

A race of real children; not too wise,

Too learned, or too good; but wanton,

fresh,

And banded up and down by love and  
hate;

<sup>1</sup> See page 183.

Not unresentful where self-justified ;  
 Fierce, moody, patient, venturous, modest,  
     shy ; 415  
 Mad at their sports like withered leaves  
     in winds ;  
 Though doing wrong and suffering, and  
     full oft  
 Bending beneath our life's mysterious  
     weight  
 Of pain, and doubt, and fear, yet yielding  
     not  
 In happiness to the happiest upon earth.  
 Simplicity in habit, truth in speech, 421  
 Be these the daily strengtheners of their  
     minds ;  
 May books and Nature be their early joy !  
 And knowledge, rightly honoured with  
     that name—  
 Knowledge not purchased by the loss of  
     power ! 425

Well do I call to mind the very week  
 When I was first intrusted to the care  
 Of that sweet Valley ; when its paths, its  
     shores,  
 And brooks were like a dream of novelty  
 To my half-infant thoughts ; that very  
     week, 430  
 While I was roving up and down alone,  
 Seeking I knew not what, I chanced to  
     cross  
 One of those open fields, which, shaped  
     like ears,  
 Make green peninsulas on Esthwaite's  
     Lake :  
 Twilight was coming on, yet through the  
     gloom 435  
 Appeared distinctly on the opposite shore  
 A heap of garments, as if left by one  
 Who might have there been bathing.  
     Long I watched,  
 But no one owned them ; meanwhile the  
     calm lake  
 Grew dark with all the shadows on its  
     breast, 440  
 And, now and then, a fish up-leaping  
     snapped  
 The breathless stillness. The succeeding  
     day,  
 Those unclaimed garments telling a plain  
     tale

Drew to the spot an anxious crowd ; some  
     looked  
 In passive expectation from the shore,  
 While from a boat others hung o'er the  
     deep, 446  
 Sounding with grappling irons and long  
     poles.  
 At last, the dead man, 'mid that beauteous  
     scene  
 Of trees and hills and water, bolt upright  
 Rose, with his ghastly face, a spectre  
     shape 450  
 Of terror ; yet no soul-debasing fear,  
 Young as I was, a child not nine years old,  
 Possessed me, for my inner eye had seen  
 Such sights before, among the shining  
     streams  
 Of faery land, the forest of romance. 455  
 Their spirit hallowed the sad spectacle  
 With decoration of ideal grace ;  
 A dignity, a smoothness, like the works  
 Of Grecian art, and purest poesy.

A precious treasure had I long pos-  
     sessed, 460  
 A little yellow, canvas-covered book,  
 A slender abstract of the Arabian tales ;  
 And, from companions in a new abode,  
 When first I learnt, that this dear prize  
     of mine  
 Was but a block hewn from a mighty  
     quarry— 465  
 That there were four large volumes, laden  
     all  
 With kindred matter, 'twas to me, in  
     truth,  
 A promise scarcely earthly. Instantly,  
 With one not richer than myself, I made  
 A covenant that each should lay aside  
 The moneys he possessed, and hoard up  
     more, 471  
 Till our joint savings had amassed enough  
 To make this book our own. Through  
     several months,  
 In spite of all temptation, we preserved  
 Religiously that vow ; but firmness failed,  
 Nor were we ever masters of our wish.

And when thereafter to my father's  
     house 477  
 The holidays returned me, there to find

That golden store of books which I had  
left,  
What joy was mine! How often in the  
course 480  
Of those glad respites, though a soft west  
wind  
Ruffled the waters to the angler's wish,  
For a whole day together, have I lain  
Down by thy side, O Derwent! murmur-  
ing stream,  
On the hot stones, and in the glaring  
sun, 485  
And there have read, devouring as I read,  
Defrauding the day's glory, desperate!  
Till with a sudden bound of smart re-  
proach,  
Such as an idler deals with in his shame,  
I to the sport betook myself again. 490

A gracious spirit o'er this earth pre-  
sides,  
And o'er the heart of man: invisibly  
It comes, to works of unreprieved delight,  
And tendency benign, directing those  
Who care not, know not, think not what  
they do. 495  
The tales that charm away the wakeful  
night  
In Araby, romances; legends penned  
For solace by dim light of monkish lamps;  
Fictions, for ladies of their love, devised  
By youthful squires; adventures endless,  
spun 500  
By the dismantled warrior in old age,  
Out of the bowels of those very schemes  
In which his youth did first extravagate;  
These spread like day, and something in  
the shape  
Of these will live till man shall be no  
more. 505  
Dumb yearnings, hidden appetites, are  
ours,  
And *they must* have their food. Our  
childhood sits,  
Our simple childhood, sits upon a throne  
That hath more power than all the ele-  
ments. 509  
I guess not what this tells of Being past,  
Nor what it augurs of the life to come;  
But so it is, and, in that dubious hour,  
That twilight when we first begin to see

This dawning earth, to recognise, ex-  
pect, 514  
And, in the long probation that ensues,  
The time of trial, ere we learn to live  
In reconciliation with our stinted powers;  
To endure this state of meagre vassalage,  
Unwilling to forego, confess, submit,  
Uneasy and unsettled, yoke-fellows 520  
To custom, mettlesome, and not yet tamed  
And humbled down;—oh! then we feel,  
we feel,  
We know where we have friends. Ye  
dreamers, then,  
Forgers of daring tales! we bless you  
then, 524  
Impostors, drivellers, dotards, as the ape  
Philosophy will call you: *then* we feel  
With what, and how great might ye are  
in league,  
Who make our wish, our power, our  
thought a deed,  
An empire, a possession,—ye whom time  
And seasons serve; all Faculties to whom  
Earth crouches, the elements are potter's  
clay, 531  
Space like a heaven filled up with northern  
lights,  
Here, nowhere, there, and everywhere at  
once:  
  
Relinquishing this lofty eminence  
For ground, though humbler, not the less  
a tract 535  
Of the same isthmus, which our spirits  
cross  
In progress from their native continent  
To earth and human life, the Song might  
dwell  
On that delightful time of growing youth  
When craving for the marvellous gives  
way 540  
To strengthening love for things that we  
have seen;  
When sober truth and steady sympathies,  
Offered to notice by less daring pens,  
Take firmer hold of us, and words them-  
selves  
Move us with conscious pleasure.  
I am sad  
At thought of raptures now for ever  
flown; 546

Almost to tears I sometimes could be sad  
 To think of, to read over, many a page,  
 Poems withal of name, which at that time  
 Did never fail to entrance me, and are  
     now 550  
 Dead in my eyes, dead as a theatre  
 Fresh emptied of spectators. Twice five  
     years  
 Or less I might have seen, when first my  
     mind  
 With conscious pleasure opened to the  
     charm  
 Of words in tuneful order, found them  
     sweet 555  
 For their own *sakes*, a passion, and a  
     power;  
 And phrases pleased me chosen for de-  
     light,  
 For pomp, or love. Oft, in the public  
     roads  
 Yet unfrequented, while the morning  
     light  
 Was yellowing the hill tops, I went  
     abroad 560  
 With a dear friend, and for the better  
     part  
 Of two delightful hours we strolled along  
 By the still borders of the misty lake,  
 Repeating favourite verses with one voice,  
 Or conning more, as happy as the birds  
 That round us chaunted. Well might we  
     be glad, 566  
 Lifted above the ground by airy fancies,  
 More bright than madness or the dreams  
     of wine;  
 And, though full oft the objects of our  
     love  
 Were false, and in their splendour over-  
     wrought, 570  
 Yet was there surely then no vulgar  
     power  
 Working within us,—nothing less, in  
     truth,  
 Than that most noble attribute of man,

Though yet untutored and inordinate,  
 That wish for something loftier, more  
     adorned, 575  
 Than is the common aspect, daily garb,  
 Of human life. What wonder, then, if  
     sounds  
 Of exultation echoed through the groves!  
 For, images, and sentiments, and words,  
 And everything encountered or pursued  
 In that delicious world of poesy, 581  
 Kept holiday, a never-ending show,  
 With music, incense, festival, and flowers!  
  
     Here must we pause: this only let me  
     add,\*  
 From heart-experience, and in humblest  
     sense 585  
 Of modesty, that he, who in his youth  
 A daily wanderer among woods and fields  
 With living Nature hath been intimate,  
 Not only in that raw unpractised time  
 Is stirred to ecstasy, as others are, 590  
 By glittering verse; but further, doth  
     receive,  
 In measure only dealt out to himself,  
 Knowledge and increase of enduring joy  
 From the great Nature that exists in  
     works  
 Of mighty Poets. Visionary power 595  
 Attends the motions of the viewless winds,  
 Embodied in the mystery of words:  
 There, darkness makes abode, and all the  
     host  
 Of shadowy things work endless changes,  
     —there, 599  
 As in a mansion like their proper home,  
 Even forms and substances are circum-  
     fused  
 By that transparent veil with light divine,  
 And, through the turnings intricate of  
     verse,  
 Present themselves as objects recognised,  
 In flashes, and with glory not their  
     own. 605

## BOOK SIXTH.

### CAMBRIDGE AND THE ALPS.

THE leaves were fading when to Esth-  
waite's banks  
And the simplicities of cottage life  
I bade farewell; and, one among the  
youth

Who, summoned by that season, reunite  
As scattered birds troop to the fowler's  
lure, 5  
Went back to Granta's cloisters, not so  
prompt

Or eager, though as gay and undepressed  
In mind, as when I thence had taken flight  
A few short months before. I turned my  
face

Without repining from the coves and  
heights 10  
Clothed in the sunshine of the withering  
fern;

Quitted, not loth, the mild magnificence  
Of calmer lakes and louder streams; and  
you,

Frank-hearted maids of rocky Cumber-  
land,

You and your not unwelcome days of  
mirth 15

Relinquished, and your nights of revelry,  
And in my own unlovely cell sate down  
In lightsome mood—such privilege has  
youth

That cannot take long leave of pleasant  
thoughts.

The bonds of indolent society 20  
Relaxing in their hold, henceforth I lived  
More to myself. Two winters may be  
passed

Without a separate notice: many books  
Were skimmed, devoured, or studiously  
perused,

But with no settled plan. I was detached  
Internally from academic cares: 26

Yet independent study seemed a course  
Of hardy disobedience towards friends  
And kindred, proud rebellion and un-  
kind.

This spurious virtue, rather let it bear 30  
A name it now deserves, this cowardice,  
Gave treacherous sanction to that over-  
love

Of freedom which encouraged me to turn  
From regulations even of my own  
As from restraints and bonds. Yet who  
can tell— 35

Who knows what thus may have been  
gained, both then

And at a later season, or preserved;  
What love of nature, what original  
strength

Of contemplation, what intuitive truths,  
The deepest and the best, what keen  
research, 40

Unbiassed, unbewildered, and unawed?

The Poet's soul was with me at that  
time;

Sweet meditations, the still overflow  
Of present happiness, while future years  
Lacked not anticipations, tender dreams,  
No few of which have since been realised;  
And some remain, hopes for my future  
life. 47

Four years and thirty, told this very  
week,

Have I been now a sojourner on earth,  
By sorrow not unsmitten; yet for me 50  
Life's morning radiance hath not left the  
hills,

Her dew is on the flowers. Those were  
the days

Which also first emboldened me to trust  
With firmness, hitherto but slightly  
touched

By such a daring thought, that I might  
 leave 55  
 Some monument behind me which pure  
 hearts  
 Should reverence. The instinctive hum-  
 bleness,  
 Maintained even by the very name and  
 thought  
 Of printed books and authorship, began  
 To melt away; and further, the dread  
 awe 60  
 Of mighty names was softened down and  
 seemed  
 Approachable, admitting fellowship  
 Of modest sympathy. Such aspect now,  
 Though not familiarly, my mind put on,  
 Content to observe, to achieve, and to  
 enjoy. 65

All winter long, whenever free to  
 choose,  
 Did I by night frequent the College  
 groves  
 And tributary walks; the last, and oft  
 The only one, who had been lingering  
 there  
 Through hours of silence, till the porter's  
 bell, 70  
 A punctual follower on the stroke of nine,  
 Rang with its blunt unceremonious voice,  
 Inexorable summons! Lofty elms,  
 Inviting shades of opportune recess,  
 Bestowed composure on a neighbourhood  
 Unpeaceful in itself. A single tree 76  
 With sinuous trunk, boughs exquisitely  
 wreathed,  
 Grew there; an ash which Winter for  
 himself  
 Decked as in pride, and with outlandish  
 grace:  
 Up from the ground, and almost to the  
 top, 80  
 The trunk and every master branch were  
 green  
 With clustering ivy, and the lightsome  
 twigs  
 And outer spray profusely tipped with  
 seeds  
 That hung in yellow tassels, while the air  
 Stirred them, not voiceless. Often have  
 I stood 85

Foot-bound uplooking at this lovely tree  
 Beneath a frosty moon. The hemisphere  
 Of magic fiction, verse of mine perchance  
 May never tread; but scarcely Spenser's  
 self  
 Could have more tranquil visions in his  
 youth, 90  
 Or could more bright appearances create  
 Of human forms with superhuman powers,  
 Than I beheld loitering on calm clear  
 nights  
 Alone, beneath this fairy work of earth.

On the vague reading of a truant youth  
 'Twere idle to descant. My inner judg-  
 ment 96  
 Not seldom differed from my taste in  
 books,  
 As if it appertained to another mind,  
 And yet the books which then I valued  
 most  
 Are dearest to me now; for, having  
 scanned, 100  
 Not heedlessly, the laws, and watched  
 the forms  
 Of Nature, in that knowledge I possessed  
 A standard, often usefully applied,  
 Even when unconsciously, to things re-  
 moved  
 From a familiar sympathy.—In fine, 105  
 I was a better judge of thoughts than  
 words,  
 Misled in estimating words, not only  
 By common inexperience of youth,  
 But by the trade in classic niceties,  
 The dangerous craft of culling term and  
 phrase 110  
 From languages that want the living  
 voice  
 To carry meaning to the natural heart;  
 To tell us what is passion, what is truth,  
 What reason, what simplicity and sense.

Yet may we not entirely overlook 115  
 The pleasure gathered from the rudi-  
 ments  
 Of geometric science. Though advanced  
 In these enquiries, with regret I speak,  
 No farther than the threshold, there I  
 found  
 Both elevation and composed delight:

With Indian awe and wonder, ignorance  
pleased 121  
With its own struggles, did I meditate  
On the relation those abstractions bear  
To Nature's laws, and by what process led,  
Those immaterial agents bowed their  
heads 125  
Duly to serve the mind of earth-born man;  
From star to star, from kindred sphere to  
sphere,  
From system on to system without end.

More frequently from the same source  
I drew  
A pleasure quiet and profound, a sense  
Of permanent and universal sway, 131  
And paramount belief; there, recognised  
A type, for finite natures, of the one  
Supreme Existence, the surpassing life  
Which—to the boundaries of space and  
time, 135  
Of melancholy space and doleful time,  
Superior, and incapable of change,  
Nor touched by welterings of passion—is,  
And hath the name of, God. Transcendent  
peace  
And silence did await upon these thoughts  
That were a frequent comfort to my  
youth. 141

'Tis told by one whom stormy waters  
threw,  
With fellow-sufferers by the shipwreck  
spared,  
Upon a desert coast, that having brought  
To land a single volume, saved by chance,  
A treatise of Geometry, he wont, 146  
Although of food and clothing destitute,  
And beyond common wretchedness depressed,\*  
To part from company and take this book  
(Then first a self-taught pupil in its  
truths) 150  
To spots remote, and draw his diagrams  
With a long staff upon the sand, and thus  
Did oft beguile his sorrow, and almost  
Forget his feeling: so (if like effect  
From the same cause produced, 'mid  
outward things 155  
So different, may rightly be compared),  
So was it then with me, and so will be

With Poets ever. Mighty is the charm  
Of those abstractions to a mind beset  
With images, and haunted by herself,  
And specially delightful unto me 161  
Was that clear synthesis built up aloft  
So gracefully; even then when it appeared  
Not more than a mere plaything, or a toy  
To sense embodied: not the thing it is  
In verity, an independent world, 166  
Created out of pure intelligence.

Such dispositions then were mine un-  
earned  
By aught, I fear, of genuine desert—  
Mine, through heaven's grace and inborn  
aptitudes. 170  
And not to leave the story of that time  
Imperfect, with these habits must be  
joined  
Moods melancholy, fits of spleen, that  
loved  
A pensive sky, sad days, and piping  
winds,  
The twilight more than dawn, autumn  
than spring; 175  
A treasured and luxurious gloom of choice  
And inclination mainly, and the mere  
Redundancy of youth's contentedness.  
—To time thus spent, add multitudes of  
hours  
Pilfered away, by what the Bard who  
sang 180  
Of the Enchanter Indolence hath called  
"Good-natured lounging," and behold a  
map  
Of my collegiate life—far less intense  
Than duty called for, or, without regard  
To duty, *might* have sprung up of itself  
By change of accidents, or even, to  
speak 185  
Without unkindness, in another place.  
Yet why take refuge in that plea?—the  
fault,  
This I repeat, was mine; mine be the  
blame.

In summer, making quest for works of  
art, 190  
Or scenes renowned for beauty, I ex-  
plored

That streamlet whose blue current works  
its way  
Between romantic Dovedale's spiry rocks;  
Fried into Yorkshire dales, or hidden  
tracts  
Of my own native region, and was blest  
Between these sundry wanderings with  
a joy 196  
Above all joys, that seemed another morn  
Risen on mid noon; blest with the  
presence, Friend!  
Of that sole Sister, her who hath been  
long  
Dear to thee also, thy true friend and  
mine, 200  
Now, after separation desolate,  
Restored to me—such absence that she  
seemed  
A gift then first bestowed. The varied  
banks  
Of Emont, hitherto unnamed in song,  
And that monastic castle, 'mid tall trees,  
Low-standing by the margin of the  
stream, 206  
A mansion visited (as fame reports)  
By Sidney, where, in sight of our Hel-  
vellyn,  
Or stormy Cross-fell, snatches he might  
pen  
Of his Arcadia, by fraternal love 210  
Inspired;—that river and those moulder-  
ing towers  
Have seen us side by side, when, having  
clomb  
The darksome windings of a broken stair,  
And crept along a ridge of fractured wall,  
Not without trembling, we in safety  
looked 215  
Forth, through some Gothic window's  
open space,  
And gathered with one mind a rich  
reward  
From the far-stretching landscape, by  
the light  
Of morning beautified, or purple eve;  
Or, not less pleased, lay on some turret's  
head, 220  
Catching from tufts of grass and hare-  
bell flowers  
Their faintest whisper to the passing  
breeze,

Given out while mid-day heat oppressed  
the plains.

Another maid there was, who also shed  
A gladness o'er that season, then to me,  
By her exulting outside look of youth 226  
And placid under-countenance, first en-  
deared;

That other spirit, Coleridge! who is now  
So near to us, that meek confiding heart,  
So revered by us both. O'er paths  
and fields 230

In all that neighbourhood, through nar-  
row lanes

Of eglantine, and through the shady  
woods,  
And o'er the Border Beacon, and the  
waste

Of naked pools, and common crags that  
lay

Exposed on the bare fell, were scattered  
love, 235

The spirit of pleasure, and youth's golden  
gleam.

O Friend! we had not seen thee at that  
time,

And yet a power is on me, and a strong  
Confusion, and I seem to plant thee there.  
Far art thou wandered now in search of  
health 240

And milder breezes,—melancholy lot!  
But thou art with us, with us in the past,  
The present, with us in the times to come.  
There is no grief, no sorrow, no despair,  
No languor, no dejection, no dismay, 245  
No absence scarcely can there be, for  
those

Who love as we do. Speed thee well!  
divide

With us thy pleasure; thy returning  
strength,

Receive it daily as a joy of ours;  
Share with us thy fresh spirits, whether  
gift 250

Of gales Etesian or of tender thoughts.

I, too, have been a wanderer; but, alas!  
How different the fate of different men.  
Though mutually unknown, yea, nursed  
and reared 254  
As if in several elements, we were framed

To bend at last to the same discipline,  
 Predestined, if two beings ever were,  
 To seek the same delights, and have one  
 health,  
 One happiness. Throughout this narra-  
 tive,  
 Else sooner ended, I have borne in  
 mind 260  
 For whom it registers the birth, and  
 marks the growth,  
 Of gentleness, simplicity, and truth,  
 And joyous loves, that hallow innocent  
 days  
 Of peace and self-command. Of rivers,  
 fields,  
 And groves I speak to thee, my Friend !  
 to thee, 265  
 Who, yet a liveried schoolboy, in the  
 depths  
 Of the huge city, on the leaded roof  
 Of that wide edifice, thy school and home,  
 Wert used to lie and gaze upon the clouds  
 Moving in heaven; or, of that pleasure  
 tired, 270  
 To shut thine eyes, and by internal light  
 See trees, and meadows, and thy native  
 stream,  
 Far distant, thus beheld from year to year  
 Of a long exile. Nor could I forget,  
 In this late portion of my argument, 275  
 That scarcely, as my term of pupilage  
 Ceased, had I left those academic bowers  
 When thou wert thither guided. From  
 the heart  
 Of London, and from cloisters there, thou  
 camest,  
 And didst sit down in temperance and  
 peace, 280  
 A rigorous student. What a stormy  
 course  
 Then followed. Oh ! it is a pang that  
 calls  
 For utterance, to think what easy change  
 Of circumstances might to thee have  
 spared  
 A world of pain, ripened a thousand  
 hopes, 285  
 For ever withered. Through this retro-  
 spect  
 Of my collegiate life I still have had  
 Thy after-sojourn in the self-same place

Present before my eyes, have played with  
 times  
 And accidents as children do with cards,  
 Or as a man, who, when his house is  
 built, 291  
 A frame locked up in wood and stone,  
 doth still,  
 As impotent fancy prompts, by his fire-  
 side,  
 Rebuild it to his liking. I have thought  
 Of thee, thy learning, gorgeous eloquence,  
 And all the strength and plumage of thy  
 youth, 296  
 Thy subtle speculations, toils abstruse  
 Among the schoolmen, and Platonic forms  
 Of wild ideal pageantry, shaped out  
 From things well-matched or ill, and  
 words for things, 300  
 The self-created sustenance of a mind  
 Debarred from Nature's living images,  
 Compelled to be a life unto herself,  
 And unrelentingly possessed by thirst  
 Of greatness, love, and beauty. Not  
 alone, 305  
 Ah ! surely not in singleness of heart  
 Should I have seen the light of evening  
 fade  
 From smooth Cam's silent waters: had  
 we met,  
 Even at that early time, needs must I  
 trust  
 In the belief, that my maturer age, 310  
 My calmer habits, and more steady voice,  
 Would with an influence benign have  
 soothed,  
 Or chased away, the airy wretchedness  
 That battered on thy youth. But thou  
 hast trod  
 A march of glory, which doth put to  
 shame 315  
 These vain regrets; health suffers in thee,  
 else  
 Such grief for thee would be the weakest  
 thought  
 That ever harboured in the breast of man.  
 A passing word erewhile did lightly  
 touch  
 On wanderings of my own, that now  
 embraced 320  
 With livelier hope a region wider far.

When the third summer freed us from  
 restraint,  
 A youthful friend, he too a mountaineer,  
 Not slow to share my wishes, took his  
 staff,  
 And sallying forth, we journeyed side by  
 side, 325  
 Bound to the distant Alps. A hardy  
 slight  
 Did this unprecedented course imply  
 Of college studies and their set rewards;  
 Nor had, in truth, the scheme been  
 formed by me 329  
 Without uneasy forethought of the pain,  
 The censures, and ill-omening of those  
 To whom my worldly interests were  
 dear.  
 But Nature then was sovereign in my  
 mind,  
 And mighty forms, seizing a youthful  
 fancy, 334  
 Had given a charter to irregular hopes.  
 In any age of uneventful calm  
 Among the nations, surely would my  
 heart  
 Have been possessed by similar desire;  
 But Europe at that time was thrilled  
 with joy.  
 France standing on the top of golden  
 hours, 340  
 And human nature seeming born again.

Lightly equipped, and but a few brief  
 looks  
 Cast on the white cliffs of our native shore  
 From the receding vessel's deck, we  
 chanced  
 To land at Calais on the very eve 345  
 Of that great federal day; and there we  
 saw,  
 In a mean city, and among a few,  
 How bright a face is worn when joy of  
 one  
 Is joy for tens of millions. Southward  
 thence  
 We held our way, direct through hamlets,  
 towns, 350  
 Gaudy with reliques of that festival,  
 Flowers left to wither on triumphal arcs,  
 And window-garlands. On the public  
 roads,

And, once, three days successively,  
 through paths  
 By which our toilsome journey was  
 abridged, 355  
 Among sequestered villages we walked  
 And found benevolence and blessedness  
 Spread like a fragrance everywhere, when  
 spring  
 Hath left no corner of the land un-  
 touched:  
 Where elms for many and many a league  
 in files 360  
 With their thin umbrage, on the stately  
 roads  
 Of that great kingdom, rustled o'er our  
 heads,  
 For ever near us as we paced along:  
 How sweet at such a time, with such  
 delight  
 On every side, in prime of youthful  
 strength, 365  
 To feed a Poet's tender melancholy  
 And fond conceit of sadness, with the  
 sound  
 Of undulations varying as might please  
 The wind that swayed them; once, and  
 more than once,  
 Unhoused beneath the evening star we  
 saw 370  
 Dances of liberty, and, in late hours  
 Of darkness, dances in the open air  
 Deftly prolonged, though grey-haired  
 lookers on  
 Might waste their breath in chiding.  
 Under hills—  
 The vine-clad hills and slopes of Bur-  
 gundy, 375  
 Upon the bosom of the gentle Saone  
 We glided forward with the flowing  
 stream.  
 Swift Rhone! thou wert the wings on  
 which we cut  
 A winding passage with majestic ease  
 Between thy lofty rocks. Enchanting  
 show 380  
 Those woods and farms and orchards  
 did present,  
 And single cottages and lurking towns,  
 Reach after reach, succession without end  
 Of deep and stately vales! A lonely  
 pair

Of strangers, till day closed, we sailed  
 along, 385  
 Clustered together with a merry crowd  
 Of those emancipated, a blithe host  
 Of travellers, chiefly delegates returning  
 From the great spousals newly solemnized  
 At their chief city, in the sight of Heaven.  
 Like bees they swarmed, gaudy and gay  
 as bees; 391  
 Some vapoured in the unruliness of joy,  
 And with their swords flourished as if to  
 fight  
 The saucy air. In this proud company  
 We landed—took with them our evening  
 meal, 395  
 Guests welcome almost as the angels were  
 To Abraham of old. The supper done,  
 With flowing cups elate and happy  
 thoughts  
 We rose at signal given, and formed a  
 ring  
 And, hand in hand, danced round and  
 round the board; 400  
 All hearts were open, every tongue was  
 loud  
 With amity and glee; we bore a name  
 Honoured in France, the name of English-  
 men,  
 And hospitably did they give us hail,  
 As their forerunners in a glorious course;  
 And round and round the board we  
 danced again. 406  
 With these blithe friends our voyage we  
 renewed  
 At early dawn. The monastery bells  
 Made a sweet jingling in our youthful  
 ears;  
 The rapid river flowing without noise, 410  
 And each uprising or receding spire  
 Spake with a sense of peace, at intervals  
 Touching the heart amid the boisterous  
 crew  
 By whom we were encompassed. Taking  
 leave  
 Of this glad throng, foot-travellers side  
 by side, 415  
 Measuring our steps in quiet, we pursued  
 Our journey, and ere twice the sun had  
 set  
 Beheld the Convent of Chartreuse, and  
 there

Rested within an awful *solitude*;  
 Yes; for even then no other than a place  
 Of soul-affecting *solitude* appeared 421  
 That far-famed region, though our eyes  
 had seen,  
 As toward the sacred mansion we ad-  
 vanced,  
 Arms flashing, and a military glare  
 Of riotous men commissioned to expel 425  
 The blameless inmates, and belike subvert  
 That frame of social being, which so long  
 Had bodied forth the ghostliness of  
 things  
 In silence visible and perpetual calm.  
 —“Stay, stay your sacrilegious hands!”—  
 The voice 430  
 Was Nature’s, uttered from her Alpine  
 throne;  
 I heard it then, and seem to hear it now—  
 “Your impious work forbear: perish  
 what may,  
 Let this one temple last, be this one spot  
 Of earth devoted to eternity!” 435  
 She ceased to speak, but while St. Bruno’s  
 pines  
 Waved their dark tops, not silent as they  
 waved,  
 And while below, along their several beds,  
 Murmured the sister streams of Life and  
 Death,  
 Thus by conflicting passions pressed, my  
 heart 440  
 Responded; “Honour to the patriot’s  
 zeal!  
 Glory and hope to new-born Liberty!  
 Hail to the mighty projects of the time!  
 Discerning sword that Justice wields, do  
 thou  
 Go forth and prosper; and, ye purging  
 fires, 445  
 Up to the loftiest towers of Pride ascend,  
 Fanned by the breath of angry Provi-  
 dence.  
 But oh! if Past and Future be the wings  
 On whose support harmoniously con-  
 joined  
 Moves the great spirit of human know-  
 ledge, spare 450  
 These courts of mystery, where a step  
 advanced  
 Between the portals of the shadowy rocks

Leaves far behind life's treacherous vanities,  
 For penitential tears and trembling hopes  
 Exchanged—to equalise in God's pure sight 455  
 Monarch and peasant: be the house redeemed  
 With its unworldly votaries, for the sake  
 Of conquest over sense, hourly achieved  
 Through faith and meditative reason, resting  
 Upon the word of heaven-imparted truth,  
 Calmly triumphant; and for humbler claim 461  
 Of that imaginative impulse sent  
 From these majestic floods, yon shining cliffs,  
 The untransmuted shapes of many worlds,  
 Cerulean ether's pure inhabitants, 465  
 These forests unapproachable by death,  
 That shall endure as long as man endures,  
 To think, to hope, to worship, and to feel,  
 To struggle, to be lost within himself  
 In trepidation, from the blank abyss 470  
 To look with bodily eyes, and be consoled."  
 Not seldom since that moment have I wished  
 That thou, O Friend! the trouble or the calm  
 Hadst shared, when, from profane regards apart,  
 In sympathetic reverence we trod 475  
 The floors of those dim cloisters, till that hour,  
 From their foundation, strangers to the presence  
 Of unrestricted and unthinking man.  
 Abroad, how cheerily the sunshine lay  
 Upon the open lawns! Vallombre's groves 480  
 Entering, we fed the soul with darkness; thence  
 Issued, and with uplifted eyes beheld,  
 In different quarters of the bending sky,  
 The cross of Jesus stand erect, as if  
 Hands of angelic powers had fixed it there, 485  
 Memorial revered by a thousand storms;

Yet then, from the indiscriminating sweep  
 And rage of one State-whirlwind, insecure.  
 'Tis not my present purpose to retrace  
 That variegated journey step by step. 490  
 A march it was of military speed,  
 And Earth did change her images and forms  
 Before us, fast as clouds are changed in heaven.  
 Day after day, up early and down late,  
 From hill to vale we dropped, from vale to hill 495  
 Mounted—from province on to province swept,  
 Keen hunters in a chase of fourteen weeks,  
 Eager as birds of prey, or as a ship  
 Upon the stretch, when winds are blowing fair:  
 Sweet coverts did we cross of pastoral life, 500  
 Enticing valleys, greeted them and left  
 Too soon, while yet the very flash and gleam  
 Of salutation were not passed away.  
 Oh! sorrow for the youth who could have seen  
 Unchastened, unsubdued, unawed, un-  
 raised 505  
 To patriarchal dignity of mind,  
 And pure simplicity of wish and will,  
 Those sanctified abodes of peaceful man,  
 Pleased (though to hardship born, and compassed round  
 With danger, varying as the seasons change), 510  
 Pleased with his daily task, or, if not pleased,  
 Contented, from the moment that the dawn  
 (Ah! surely not without attendant gleams  
 Of soul-illumination) calls him forth  
 To industry, by glistenings flung on rocks,  
 Whose evening shadows lead him to repose. 516  
 Well might a stranger look with bounding heart  
 Down on a green recess, the first I saw

Of those deep haunts, an aboriginal vale,  
 Quiet and lorded over and possessed 520  
 By naked huts, wood-built, and sown like  
 tents

Or Indian cabins over the fresh lawns  
 And by the river side.

That very day,  
 From a bare ridge we also first beheld  
 Unveiled the summit of Mont Blanc, and  
 grieved 525

To have a soulless image on the eye  
 That had usurped upon a living thought  
 That never more could be. The wondrous  
 Vale

Of Chamouny stretched far below, and  
 soon

With its dumb cataracts and streams of  
 ice, 530

A motionless array of mighty waves,  
 Five rivers broad and vast, made rich  
 amends,

And reconciled us to realities;  
 There small birds warble from the leafy  
 trees,

The eagle soars high in the element, 535  
 There doth the reaper bind the yellow  
 sheaf,

The maiden spread the haycock in the sun,  
 While Winter like a well-tamed lion  
 walks,

Descending from the mountain to make  
 sport 539

Among the cottages by beds of flowers.

Whate'er in this wide circuit we beheld,  
 Or heard, was fitted to our unripe state  
 Of intellect and heart. With such a book  
 Before our eyes, we could not choose but  
 read

Lessons of genuine brotherhood, the plain  
 And universal reason of mankind, 546  
 The truths of young and old. Nor, side  
 by side

Pacing, two social pilgrims, or alone  
 Each with his humour, could we fail to  
 abound

In dreams and fictions, pensively com-  
 posed: 550

Dejection taken up for pleasure's sake,  
 And gilded sympathies, the willow  
 wreath,

And sober posies of funereal flowers,  
 Gathered among those solitudes sublime  
 From formal gardens of the lady Sorrow,  
 Did sweeten many a meditative hour. 556

Yet still in me with those soft luxuries  
 Mixed something of stern mood, an  
 under-thirst

Of vigour seldom utterly allayed:  
 And from that source how different a sad-  
 ness 560

Would issue, let one incident make  
 known.

When from the Vallais we had turned,  
 and clomb

Along the Simplon's steep and rugged  
 road,

Following a band of muleteers, we reached  
 A halting-place, where all together took  
 Their noon-tide meal. Hastily rose our  
 guide, 566

Leaving us at the board; awhile we  
 lingered,

Then paced the beaten downward way  
 that led

Right to a rough stream's edge, and there  
 broke off;

The only track now visible was one 570  
 That from the torrent's further brink  
 held forth

Conspicuous invitation to ascend  
 A lofty mountain. After brief delay  
 Crossing the unbridged stream, that road  
 we took,

And clomb with eagerness, till anxious  
 fears 575

Intruded, for we failed to overtake  
 Our comrades gone before. By fortunate  
 chance,

While every moment added doubt to  
 doubt,

A peasant met us, from whose mouth we  
 learned

That to the spot which had perplexed us  
 first 580

We must descend, and there should find  
 the road,

Which in the stony channel of the stream  
 Lay a few steps, and then along its banks;  
 And, that our future course, all plain to  
 sight,

Was downwards, with the current of that  
stream. 585

Loth to believe what we so grieved to hear,  
For still we had hopes that pointed to  
the clouds,

We questioned him again, and yet again;  
But every word that from the peasant's  
lips

Came in reply, translated by our feelings,  
Ended in this,—*that we had crossed the*  
*Alps.* 591

Imagination—here the Power so called  
Through sad incompetence of human  
speech,

That awful Power rose from the mind's  
abyss

Like an unfathered vapour that enwraps,  
At once, some lonely traveller. I was  
lost; 596

Halted without an effort to break through;  
But to my conscious soul I now can say—  
"I recognise thy glory:" in such strength  
Of usurpation, when the light of sense  
Goes out, but with a flash that has re-  
vealed 601

The invisible world, doth greatness make  
abode,

There harbours; whether we be young or  
old,

Our destiny, our being's heart and home,  
Is with infinitude, and only there; 605

With hope it is, hope that can never die,  
Effort, and expectation, and desire,  
And something evermore about to be.

Under such banners militant, the soul  
Seeks for no trophies, struggles for no  
spoils 610

That may attest her prowess, blest in  
thoughts

That are their own perfection and reward,  
Strong in herself and in beatitude

That hides her, like the mighty flood of  
Nile

Poured from his fount of Abyssinian  
clouds 615

To fertilise the whole Egyptian plain.

The melancholy slackening that ensued  
Upon those tidings by the peasant given  
Was soon dislodged. Downwards we  
hurried fast,

And, with the half-shaped road which we  
had missed, 620

Entered a narrow chasm. <sup>1</sup> The brook and  
road

Were fellow-travellers in this gloomy  
strait,

And with them did we journey several  
hours

At a slow pace. The immeasurable height  
Of woods decaying, never to be decayed,

The stationary blasts of waterfalls, 626  
And in the narrow rent at every turn  
Winds thwarting winds, bewildered and  
forlorn,

The torrents shooting from the clear blue  
sky,

The rocks that muttered close upon our  
ears, 630

Black drizzling crags that spake by the  
way-side

As if a voice were in them, the sick sight  
And giddy prospect of the raving stream,

The unfettered clouds and region of the  
Heavens,

Tumult and peace, the darkness and the  
light— 635

Were all like workings of one mind, the  
features

Of the same face, blossoms upon one tree;  
Characters of the great Apocalypse,

The types and symbols of Eternity,  
Of first, and last, and midst, and without  
end. 640

That night our lodging was a house  
that stood

Alone, within the valley, at a point  
Where, tumbling from aloft, a torrent  
swelled

The rapid stream whose margin we had  
trod;

A dreary mansion, large beyond all need,  
With high and spacious rooms, deafened  
and stunned 646

By noise of waters, making innocent sleep  
Lie melancholy among weary bones.

Uprisen betimes, our journey we re-  
newed,

<sup>1</sup> See page 186.

Led by the stream, ere noon-day magnified  
650

Into a lordly river, broad and deep,  
Dimpling along in silent majesty,  
With mountains for its neighbours, and  
in view

Of distant mountains and their snowy  
tops,

And thus proceeding to Locarno's Lake,  
Fit resting-place for such a visitant. 656  
Locarno! spreading out in width like  
Heaven,

How dost thou cleave to the poetic heart,  
Bask in the sunshine of the memory;  
And Como! thou, a treasure whom the  
earth 660

Keeps to herself, confined as in a depth  
Of Abyssinian privacy. I spake

Of thee, thy chestnut woods, and garden  
plots

Of Indian corn tended by dark-eyed  
maids;

Thy lofty steepes, and pathways roofed  
with vines, 665

Winding from house to house, from town  
to town,

Sole link that binds them to each other;  
walks,

League after league, and cloistral avenues,  
Where silence dwells if music be not  
there:

While yet a youth undisciplined in verse,  
Through fond ambition of that hour, I  
strove 671

To chant your praise; nor can approach  
you now

Ungreeted by a more melodious Song,  
Where tones of Nature smoothed by  
learned Art

May flow in lasting current. Like a  
breeze 675

Or sunbeam over your domain I passed  
In motion without pause; but ye have  
left

Your beauty with me, a serene accord  
Of forms and colours, passive, yet en-  
dowed

In their submissiveness with power as  
sweet 680

And gracious, almost might I dare to say,  
As virtue is, or goodness; sweet as love,

Or the remembrance of a generous deed,  
Or mildest visitations of pure thought,  
When God, the giver of all joy, is thanked  
Religiously, in silent blessedness; 685  
Sweet as this last herself, for such it is.

With those delightful pathways we ad-  
vanced,

For two days' space, in presence of the  
Lake,

That, stretching far among the Alps,  
assumed 690

A character more stern. The second  
night,

From sleep awakened, and misled by  
sound

Of the church clock telling the hours with  
strokes

Whose import then we had not learned,  
we rose

By moonlight, doubting not that day was  
nigh, 695

And that meanwhile, by no uncertain  
path,

Along the winding margin of the lake,  
Led, as before, we should behold the  
scene,

Hushed in profound repose. We left the  
town

Of Gravedona with this hope; but soon  
Were lost, bewildered among woods im-  
mense, 701

And on a rock sate down, to wait for day.  
An open place it was, and overlooked,

From high, the sullen water far beneath,  
On which a dull red image of the moon

Lay bedded, changing oftentimes its form  
Like an uneasy snake. From hour to  
hour

We sate and sate, wondering as if the  
night

Had been ensnared by witchcraft. On  
the rock

At last we stretched our weary limbs for  
sleep, 710

But *could not* sleep, tormented by the  
stings

Of insects, which with noise like that of  
noon

Filled all the woods: the cry of unknown  
birds;

The mountains more by blackness visible  
 And their own size, than any outward  
 light; 715  
 The breathless wilderness of clouds; the  
 clock  
 That told, with unintelligible voice,  
 The widely parted hours; the noise of  
 streams,  
 And sometimes rustling motions nigh at  
 hand,  
 That did not leave us free from personal  
 fear; 720  
 And, lastly, the withdrawing moon, that  
 set  
 Before us, while she still was high in  
 heaven;—  
 These were our food; and such a summer's  
 night  
 Followed that pair of golden days that  
 shed  
 On Como's Lake, and all that round it  
 lay, 725  
 Their fairest, softest, happiest influence.

But here I must break off, and bid  
 farewell  
 To days, each offering some new sight, or  
 fraught  
 With some untried adventure, in a course  
 Prolonged till sprinklings of autumnal  
 snow 730  
 Checked our unwearied steps. Let this  
 alone  
 Be mentioned as a parting word, that not  
 In hollow exultation, dealing out  
 Hyperboles of praise comparative; 734  
 Not rich one moment to be poor for ever;  
 Not prostrate, overborne, as if the mind  
 Herself were nothing, a mere pensioner  
 On outward forms—did we in presence  
 stand  
 Of that magnificent region. On the front  
 Of this whole Song is written that my  
 heart 740  
 Must, in such Temple, needs have offered  
 up  
 A different worship. Finally, whate'er  
 I saw, or heard, or felt, was but a stream  
 That flowed into a kindred stream; a gale,  
 Confederate with the current of the soul,

To speed my voyage; every sound or  
 sight, 745  
 In its degree of power, administered  
 To grandeur or to tenderness,—to the one  
 Directly, but to tender thoughts by means  
 Less often instantaneous in effect; 750  
 Led me to these by paths that, in the  
 main,  
 Were more circuitous, but not less sure  
 Duly to reach the point marked out by  
 Heaven.

Oh, most beloved Friend! a glorious  
 time,  
 A happy time that was; triumphant looks  
 Were then the common language of all  
 eyes; 756  
 As if awaked from sleep, the Nations  
 hailed  
 Their great expectancy: the fife of war  
 Was then a spirit-stirring sound indeed,  
 A blackbird's whistle in a budding grove.  
 We left the Swiss exulting in the fate 761  
 Of their near neighbours; and, when  
 shortening fast  
 Our pilgrimage, nor distant far from  
 home,  
 We crossed the Brabant armies on the  
 fret  
 For battle in the cause of Liberty. 765  
 A stripling, scarcely of the household  
 then  
 Of social life, I looked upon these things  
 As from a distance; heard, and saw, and  
 felt,  
 Was touched, but with no intimate con-  
 cern;  
 I seemed to move along them, as a bird 770  
 Moves through the air, or as a fish  
 pursues  
 Its sport, or feeds in its proper element;  
 I wanted not that joy, I did not need  
 Such help; the ever-living universe,  
 Turn where I might, was opening out its  
 glories, 775  
 And the independent spirit of pure youth  
 Called forth, at every season, new de-  
 lights  
 Spread round my steps like sunshine o'er  
 green fields.

## BOOK SEVENTH.

### RESIDENCE IN LONDON.

Six changeful years have vanished since  
 I first  
 Poured out (saluted by that quickening  
 breeze  
 Which met me issuing from the City's<sup>1</sup>  
 walls)  
 A glad preamble to this Verse: I sang  
 Aloud, with fervour irresistible 5  
 Of short-lived transport, like a torrent  
 bursting,  
 From a black thunder-cloud, down Scafell's  
 side  
 To rush and disappear. But soon broke  
 forth  
 (So willed the Muse) a less impetuous  
 stream,  
 That flowed awhile with unabating  
 strength, 10  
 Then stopped for years; not audible  
 again  
 Before last primrose-time. Belovèd  
 Friend!  
 The assurance which then cheered some  
 heavy thoughts  
 On thy departure to a foreign land  
 Has failed; too slowly moves the promised  
 work. 15  
 Through the whole summer have I been  
 at rest,  
 Partly from voluntary holiday,  
 And part through outward hindrance.  
 But I heard,  
 After the hour of sunset yester-even,  
 Sitting within doors between light and  
 dark, 20  
 A choir of redbreasts gathered somewhere  
 near  
 My threshold,—minstrels from the distant  
 woods  
 Sent in on Winter's service, to announce,

With preparation artful and benign,  
 That the rough lord had left the surly  
 North 25  
 On his accustomed journey. The delight,  
 Due to this timely notice, unawares  
 Smote me, and, listening, I in whispers  
 said,  
 "Ye heartsome Choristers, ye and I will  
 be  
 Associates, and, unscared by blustering  
 winds, 30  
 Will chant together." Thereafter, as the  
 shades  
 Of twilight deepened, going forth, I spied  
 A glow-worm underneath a dusky plume  
 Or canopy of yet unwithered fern,  
 Clear-shining, like a hermit's taper seen  
 Through a thick forest. Silence touched  
 me here 36  
 No less than sound had done before; the  
 child  
 Of Summer, lingering, shining, by her-  
 self,  
 The voiceless worm on the unfrequented  
 hills,  
 Seemed sent on the same errand with the  
 choir 40  
 Of Winter that had warbled at my door,  
 And the whole year breathed tenderness  
 and love.

The last night's genial feeling over-  
 flowed  
 Upon this morning, and my favourite  
 grove,  
 Tossing in sunshine its dark boughs  
 aloft, 45  
 As if to make the strong wind visible,  
 Wakes in me agitations like its own,  
 A spirit friendly to the Poet's task,  
 Which we will now resume with lively  
 hope,

<sup>1</sup> The City of Goslar in Lower Saxony.

Nor checked by aught of tamer argument,  
That lies before us, needful to be told. 51

Returned from that excursion<sup>1</sup>, soon I  
bade  
Farewell for ever to the sheltered seats  
Of gowned students, quitted hall and  
bower,  
And every comfort of that privileged  
ground, 55  
Well pleased to pitch a vagrant tent  
among  
The unfenced regions of society.

Yet, undetermined to what course of  
life  
I should adhere, and seeming to possess  
A little space of intermediate time 60  
At full command, to London first I turned,  
In no disturbance of excessive hope,  
By personal ambition unenslaved,  
Frugal as there was need, and, though  
self-willed,  
From dangerous passions free. Three  
years had flown 65  
Since I had felt in heart and soul the shock  
Of the huge town's first presence, and had  
paced  
Her endless streets, a transient visitant:  
Now, fixed amid that concourse of man-  
kind 69  
Where Pleasure whirls about incessantly,  
And life and labour seem but one, I filled  
An idler's place; an idler well content  
To have a house (what matter for a home?)  
That owned him; living cheerfully abroad  
With unchecked fancy ever on the stir, 75  
And all my young affections out of doors.

There was a time when whatsoever is  
feigned  
Of airy palaces, and gardens built  
By Genii of romance; or hath in grave  
Authentic history been set forth of Rome,  
Alcairo, Babylon, or Persepolis; 81  
Or given upon report by pilgrim friars,  
Of golden cities ten months' journey deep  
Among Tartarian wilds—fell short, far  
short,  
Of what my fond simplicity believed 85

<sup>1</sup> See page 680.

And thought of London—held me by a  
chain  
Less strong of wonder and obscure de-  
light.  
Whether the bolt of childhood's Fancy  
shot  
For me beyond its ordinary mark,  
'Twere vain to ask; but in our flock of  
boys 90  
Was One, a cripple from his birth, whom  
chance  
Summoned from school to London; for-  
tunate  
And envied traveller! When the Boy  
return'd,  
After short absence, curiously I scanned  
His mien and person, nor was free, in  
sooth, 95  
From disappointment, not to find some  
change  
In look and air, from that new region  
brought,  
As if from Fairy-land. Much I questioned  
him;  
And every word he uttered, on my ears  
Fell flatter than a caged parrot's note, 100  
That answers unexpectedly awry,  
And mocks the prompter's listening.  
Marvellous things  
Had vanity (quick Spirit that appears  
Almost as deeply seated and as strong  
In a Child's heart as fear itself) con-  
ceived 105  
For my enjoyment. Would that I could  
now  
Recall what then I pictured to myself,  
Of mitred Prelates, Lords in ermine clad,  
The King, and the King's Palace, and,  
not last,  
Nor least, Heaven bless him! the re-  
nowned Lord Mayor: 110  
Dreams not unlike to those which once  
begat  
A change of purpose in young Whitting-  
ton,  
When he, a friendless and a drooping  
boy,  
Sate on a stone, and heard the bells speak  
out 114  
Articulate music. Above all, one thought  
Baffled my understanding: how men lived

Even next-door neighbours, as we say, yet  
still  
Strangers, not knowing each the other's  
name.

O, wondrous power of words, by simple  
faith

Licensed to take the meaning that we love!  
Vauxhall and Ranelagh! I then had  
heard 121

Of your green groves, and wilderness of  
lamps

Dimming the stars, and fireworks magical,  
And gorgeous ladies, under splendid  
domes, 124

Floating in dance, or warbling high in air  
The songs of spirits! Nor had Fancy fed  
With less delight upon that other class  
Of marvels, broad-day wonders permanent:

The River proudly bridged; the dizzy top  
And Whispering Gallery of St. Paul's;  
the tombs 130

Of Westminster; the Giants of Guild-  
hall;

Bedlam, and those carved maniacs at the  
gates,

Perpetually recumbent; Statues—man,  
And the horse under him—in gilded pomp  
Adorning flowery gardens, 'mid vast  
squares; 135

The Monument, and that Chamber of the  
Tower

Where England's sovereigns sit in long  
array,

Their steeds bestriding,—every mimic  
shape

Cased in the gleaming mail the monarch  
wore,

Whether for gorgeous tournament ad-  
dressed, 140

Or life or death upon the battle-field.  
Those bold imaginations in due time  
Had vanished, leaving others in their  
stead:

And now I looked upon the living scene;  
Familiarly perused it; oftentimes, 145  
In spite of strongest disappointment,  
pleased

Through courteous self-submission, as a tax  
Paid to the object by prescriptive right.

Rise up, thou monstrous ant-hill on the  
plain

Of a too busy world! Before me flow,  
Thou endless stream of men and moving  
things! 151

Thy every-day appearance, as it strikes—  
With wonder heightened, or sublimed by  
awe—

On strangers, of all ages; the quick dance  
Of colours, lights, and forms; the deafen-  
ing din; 155

The comers and the goers face to face,  
Face after face; the string of dazzling  
wares,

Shop after shop, with symbols, blazoned  
names,

And all the tradesman's honours over-  
head:

Here, fronts of houses, like a title-page,  
With letters huge inscribed from top to  
toe; 161

Stationed above the door, like guardian  
saints,

There, allegoric shapes, female or male,  
Or physiognomies of real men.

Land-warriors, kings, or admirals of the  
sea, 165

Boyle, Shakspeare, Newton, or the attrac-  
tive head

Of some quack-doctor, famous in his  
day.

Meanwhile the roar continues, till at  
length,

Escaped as from an enemy, we turn  
Abruptly into some sequestered nook,  
Still as a sheltered place when winds blow  
loud! 171

At leisure, thence, through tracts of thin  
resort,

And sights and sounds that come at  
intervals,

We take our way. A raree-show is here,  
With children gathered round; another  
street 175

Presents a company of dancing dogs,  
Or dromedary, with an antic pair

Of monkeys on his back; a minstrel band  
Of Savoyards; or, single and alone, 179

An English ballad-singer. Private courts,  
Gloomy as coffins, and unsightly lanes

Thrilled by some female vendor's scream,  
belike

The very shrillest of all London cries,  
May then entangle our impatient steps ;  
Conducted through those labyrinths, un-  
awares, 185

To privileged regions and inviolate,  
Where from their airy lodges studious  
lawyers

Look out on waters, walks, and gardens  
green.

Thence back into the throng, until we  
reach,

Following the tide that slackens by  
degrees, 190

Some half-frequented scene, where wider  
streets

Bring straggling breezes of suburban air.  
Here files of ballads dangle from dead  
walls ;

Advertisements, of giant-size, from high.  
Press forward, in all colours, on the sight ;  
These, bold in conscious merit, lower  
down ; 196

That, fronted with a most imposing word,  
Is, peradventure, one in masquerade.

As on the broadening causeway we ad-  
vance,

Behold, turned upwards, a face hard and  
strong 200

In lineaments, and red with over-toil.  
'Tis one encountered here and every-  
where ;

A travelling cripple, by the trunk cut short,  
And stumping on his arms. In sailor's  
garb

Another lies at length, beside a range  
Of well-formed characters, with chalk in-  
scribed 206

Upon the smooth flat stones : the Nurse  
is here,

The Bachelor, that loves to sun himself,  
The military Idler, and the Dame,  
That field-ward takes her walk with decent  
steps. 210

Now homeward through the thickening  
hubbub, where

See, among less distinguishable shapes,  
The begging scavenger, with hat in hand ;

The Italian, as he thrids his way with care,  
Steadying, far-seen, a frame of images  
Upon his head ; with basket at his breast  
The Jew ; the stately and slow-moving  
Turk,

With freight of slippers piled beneath his  
arm !

Enough ;—the mighty concourse I sur-  
veyed

With no unthinking mind, well pleased  
to note 220

Among the crowd all specimens of man,  
Through all the colours which the sun  
bestows,

And every character of form and face :  
The Swede, the Russian ; from the genial  
south,

The Frenchman and the Spaniard ; from  
remote 225

America, the Hunter-Indian ; Moors,  
Malays, Lascars, the Tartar, the Chinese,  
And Negro Ladies in white muslin gowns.

At leisure, then, I viewed, from day to  
day,

The spectacles within doors,—birds and  
beasts 230

Of every nature, and strange plants con-  
vened

From every clime ; and, next, those sights  
that ape

The absolute presence of reality,  
Expressing, as in mirror, sea and land,  
And what earth is, and what she has to  
show. 235

I do not here allude to subtlest craft,  
By means refined attaining purest ends,  
But imitations, fondly made in plain  
Confession of man's weakness and his  
loves.

Whether the Painter, whose ambitious  
skill 240

Submits to nothing less than taking in  
A whole horizon's circuit, do with power,  
Like that of angels or commissioned  
spirits,

Fix us upon some lofty pinnacle,  
Or in a ship on waters, with a world 245  
Of life, and life-like mockery beneath,  
Above, behind, far stretching and before ;

Or more mechanic artist represent  
 By scale exact, in model, wood or clay,  
 From blended colours also borrowing  
 help, 230  
 Some miniature of famous spots or  
 things,—

St. Peter's Church; or, more aspiring aim,  
 In microscopic vision, Rome herself;  
 Or, haply, some choice rural haunt,—the  
 Falls

Of Tivoli; and, high upon that steep, 255  
 The Sibyl's mouldering Temple! every  
 tree,

Villa, or cottage, lurking among rocks  
 Throughout the landscape; tuft, stone,  
 scratch minute—

All that the traveller sees when he is  
 there. 259

Add to these exhibitions, mute and still,  
 Others of wider scope, where living men,  
 Music, and shifting pantomimic scenes,  
 Diversified the allurement. Need I fear  
 To mention by its name, as in degree,  
 Lowest of these and humblest in attempt,  
 Yet richly graced with honours of her own,  
 Half-rural Sadler's Wells? Though at that  
 time 267

Intolerant, as is the way of youth  
 Unless itself be pleased, here more than  
 once

Taking my seat, I saw (nor blush to add,  
 With ample recompense) giants and  
 dwarfs, 271

Clowns, conjurors, posture-masters, har-  
 lequins,

Amid the uproar of the rabblement,  
 Perform their feats. Nor was it mean  
 delight

To watch crude Nature work in untaught  
 minds; 275

To note the laws and progress of belief;  
 Though obstinate on this way, yet on that  
 How willingly we travel, and how far!

To have, for instance, brought upon the  
 scene

The champion, Jack the Giant-killer: Lo!  
 He dons his coat of darkness: on the  
 stage 281

Walks, and achieves his wonders, from  
 the eye

Of living Mortal covert, "as the moon  
 Hid in her vacant interlunar cave."  
 Delusion bold! and how can it be wrought?  
 The garb he wears is black as death, the  
 word 286  
 "Invisible" flames forth upon his chest.

Here, too, were "forms and pressures  
 of the time,"

Rough, bold, as Grecian comedy displayed  
 When Art was young; dramas of living  
 men, 290

And recent things yet warm with life;  
 a sea-fight,

Shipwreck, or some domestic incident  
 Divulged by Truth and magnified by  
 Fame;

Such as the daring brotherhood of late  
 Set forth, too serious theme for that light  
 place— 295

I mean, O distant Friend! a story drawn  
 From our own ground,—the Maid of  
 Buttermere,—

And how, unfaithful to a virtuous wife  
 Deserted and deceived, the Spoiler came  
 And wooed the artless daughter of the  
 hills, 300

And wedded her, in cruel mockery  
 Of love and marriage bonds. These words  
 to thee

Must needs bring back the moment when  
 we first,

Ere the broad world rang with the maiden's  
 name, 304

Beheld her serving at the cottage inn;  
 Both stricken, as she entered or withdrew,  
 With admiration of her modest mien  
 And carriage, marked by unexampled  
 grace.

We since that time not unfamiliarly  
 Have seen her,—her discretion have  
 observed, 310

Her just opinions, delicate reserve,  
 Her patience, and humility of mind  
 Unspoiled by commendation and the  
 excess

Of public notice—an offensive light  
 To a meek spirit suffering inwardly. 315

From this memorial tribute to my theme  
 I was returning, when, with sundry forms

Commingled—shapes which met me in the  
     way  
 That we must tread—thy image rose  
     again,  
 Maiden of Buttermere! She lives in  
     peace 320  
 Upon the spot where she was born and  
     reared;  
 Without contamination doth she live  
 In quietness, without anxiety:  
 Beside the mountain-chapel, sleeps in  
     earth  
 Her new-born infant, fearless as a lamb  
 That, thither driven from some unshel-  
     tered place, 326  
 Rests underneath the little rock-like pile  
 When storms are raging. Happy are they  
     both—  
 Mother and child!—These feelings, in  
     themselves  
 Trite, do yet scarcely seem so when I  
     think 330  
 On those ingenuous moments of our youth  
 Ere we have learnt by use to slight the  
     crimes  
 And sorrows of the world. Those simple  
     days  
 Are now my theme; and, foremost of the  
     scenes, 334  
 Which yet survive in memory, appears  
 One, at whose centre sate a lovely Boy,  
 A sportive infant, who, for six months'  
     space,  
 Not more, had been of age to deal about  
 Articulate prattle—Child as beautiful  
 As ever clung around a mother's neck, 340  
 Or father fondly gazed upon with pride.  
 There, too, conspicuous for stature tall  
 And large dark eyes, beside her infant  
     stood  
 The mother; but, upon her cheeks dif-  
     fused,  
 False tints too well accorded with the  
     glare 345  
 From play-house lustres thrown without  
     reserve  
 On every object near. The Boy had been  
 The pride and pleasure of all lookers-on  
 In whatsoever place, but seemed in this  
 A sort of alien scattered from the clouds.  
 Of lusty vigour, more than infantine 351

He was in limb, in cheek a summer rose  
 Just three parts blown—a cottage-child—  
     if e'er,  
 By cottage-door on breezy mountain-side,  
 Or in some sheltering vale, was seen a  
     babe 355  
 By Nature's gift so favoured. Upon  
     a board  
 Decked with refreshments had this child  
     been placed,  
*His* little stage in the vast theatre,  
 And there he sate surrounded with a  
     throng  
 Of chance spectators, chiefly dissolute  
     men " 360  
 And shameless women, treated and  
     caressed;  
 Ate, drank, and with the fruit and glasses  
     played,  
 While oaths and laughter and indecent  
     speech  
 Were rife about him as the songs of birds  
 Contending after showers. The mother  
     now 365  
 Is fading out of memory, but I see  
 The lovely Boy as I beheld him then  
 Among the wretched and the falsely  
     gay,  
 Like one of those who walked with hair  
     unsinged  
 Amid the fiery furnace. Charms and  
     spells 370  
 Muttered on black and spiteful instiga-  
     tion  
 Have stopped, as some believe, the kind-  
     liest growths.  
 Ah, with how different spirit might a  
     prayer  
 Have been preferred, that this fair crea-  
     ture, checked  
 By special privilege of Nature's love, 375  
 Should in his childhood be detained for  
     ever!  
 But with its universal freight the tide  
 Hath rolled along, and this bright in-  
     nocent,  
 Mary! may now have lived till he could  
     look  
 With envy on thy nameless babe that  
     sleeps, 380  
 Beside the mountain-chapel, undisturbed.

Four rapid years had scarcely then  
been told  
Since, travelling southward from our  
pastoral hills,  
I heard, and for the first time in my life,  
The voice of woman utter blasphemy—  
Saw woman as she is, to open shame 386  
Abandoned, and the pride of public vice;  
I shuddered, for a barrier seemed at once  
Thrown in, that from humanity divorced  
Humanity, splitting the race of man 390  
In twain, yet leaving the same outward  
form.  
Distress of mind ensued upon the sight,  
And ardent meditation. Later years  
Brought to such spectacle a milder sad-  
ness,  
Feelings of pure commiseration, grief 395  
For the individual and the overthrow  
Of her soul's beauty; farther I was then  
But seldom led, or wished to go; in truth  
The sorrow of the passion stopped me  
there.  
  
But let me now, less moved, in order  
take 400  
Our argument. Enough is said to show  
How casual incidents of real life,  
Observed where pastime only had been  
sought,  
Outweighed, or put to flight, the set  
events  
And measured passions of the stage,  
albeit 405  
By Siddons trod in the fulness of her  
power.  
Yet was the theatre my dear delight;  
The very gilding, lamps and painted  
scrolls,  
And all the mean upholstery of the place,  
Wanted not animation, when the tide 410  
Of pleasure ebbed but to return as fast  
With the ever-shifting figures of the  
scene,  
Solemn or gay: whether some beauteous  
dame  
Advanced in radiance through a deep  
recess  
Of thick entangled forest, like the moon  
Opening the clouds; or sovereign king,  
announced 416

With flourishing trumpet, came in full-  
blown state  
Of the world's greatness, winding round  
with train  
Of courtiers, banners, and a length of  
guards;  
Or captive led in abject weeds, and  
jingling 420  
His slender manacles; or romping girl  
Bounced, leapt, and pawed the air; or  
mumbling sire,  
A scare-crow pattern of old age dressed up  
In all the tatters of infirmity  
All loosely put together, hobbled in, 425  
Stumping upon a cane with which he  
smites,  
From time to time, the solid boards, and  
makes them  
Prate somewhat loudly of the whereabouts  
Of one so overloaded with his years.  
But what of this! the laugh, the grin,  
grimace, 430  
The antics striving to outstrip each other,  
Were all received, the least of them not  
lost,  
With an unmeasured welcome. Through  
the night,  
Between the show, and many-headed  
mass 434  
Of the spectators, and each several nook  
Filled with its fray or brawl, how eagerly  
And with what flashes, as it were, the  
mind  
Turned this way—that way! sportive and  
alert  
And watchful, as a kitten when at play,  
While winds are eddying round her,  
among straws 440  
And rustling leaves. Enchanting age and  
sweet!  
Romantic almost, looked at through a  
space,  
How small, of intervening years! For  
then,  
Though surely no mean progress had been  
made  
In meditations holy and sublime, 445  
Yet something of a girlish child-like gloss  
Of novelty survived for scenes like these;  
Enjoyment haply handed down from  
times

When at a country-playhouse, some rude  
harm

Tricked out for that proud use, if I per-  
chance 450

Caught, on a summer evening through  
a chink

In the old wall, an unexpected glimpse  
Of daylight, the bare thought of where  
I was

Gladdened me more than if I had been  
led

Into a dazzling cavern of romance, 455  
Crowded with Genii busy among works  
Not to be looked at by the common sun.

The matter that detains us now may  
seem,

To many, neither dignified enough  
Nor arduous, yet will not be scorned by  
them, 460

Who, looking inward, have observed the  
ties

That bind the perishable hours of life  
Each to the other, and the curious props  
By which the world of memory and  
thought

Exists and is sustained. More lofty  
themes, 465

Such as at least do wear a prouder face,  
Solicit our regard; but when I think  
Of these, I feel the imaginative power  
Languish within me; even then it slept,  
When, pressed by tragic sufferings, the  
heart 470

Was more than full; amid my sobs and  
tears

It slept, even in the pregnant season of  
youth.

For though I was most passionately moved  
And yielded to all changes of the scene  
With an obsequious promptness, yet the  
storm 475

Passed not beyond the suburbs of the  
mind;

Save when realities of act and mien,  
The incarnation of the spirits that move  
In harmony amid the Poet's world,  
Rose to ideal grandeur, or, called forth 480  
By power of contrast, made me recognise,  
As at a glance, the things which I had  
shaped,

And yet not shaped, had seen and scarcely  
seen,

When, having closed the mighty Shak-  
speare's page,

I mused, and thought, and felt, in soli-  
tude. 485

Pass we from entertainments, that are  
such

Professedly, to others titled higher,  
Yet, in the estimate of youth at least,  
More near akin to those than names  
imply,—

I mean the brawls of lawyers in their  
courts, 490

Before the ermined judge, or that great  
stage

Where senators, tongue-favoured men,  
perform,

Admired and envied. Oh! the beating  
heart,

When one among the prime of these rose  
up,—

One, of whose name from childhood we  
had heard 495

Familiarly, a household term, like those,  
The Bedfords, Glosters, Salisburys, of old  
Whom the fifth Harry talks of. Silence!  
hush!

This is no trifier, no short-flighted wit,  
No stammerer of a minute, painfully 500  
Delivered. No! the Orator hath yoked  
The Hours, like young Aurora, to his car:  
Thrice welcome Presence! how can pa-  
tience e'er

Grow weary of attending on a track  
That kindles with such glory! All are  
charmed, 505

Astonished; like a hero in romance,  
He winds away his never-ending horn;  
Words follow words, sense seems to follow  
sense:

What memory and what logic! till the  
strain 509

Transcendent, superhuman as it seemed,  
Grows tedious even in a young man's ear.

Genius of Burke! forgive the pen  
seduced

By specious wonders, and too slow to tell  
Of what the ingenuous, what bewildered  
men,

Beginning to mistrust their boastful  
guides, 515  
And wise men, willing to grow wiser,  
caught,  
Rapt auditors! from thy most eloquent  
tongue—  
Now mute, for ever mute in the cold  
grave.  
I see him,—old, but vigorous in age,—  
Stand like an oak whose stag-horn  
branches start 520  
Out of its leafy brow, the more to awe  
The younger brethren of the grove. But  
some—  
While he forewarns, denounces, launches  
forth,  
Against all systems built on abstract  
rights,  
Keen ridicule; the majesty proclaims 525  
Of Institutes and Laws, hallowed by time;  
Declares the vital power of social ties  
Endeared by Custom; and with high  
disdain,  
Exploding upstart Theory, insists  
Upon the allegiance to which men are  
born— 530  
Some—say at once a froward multitude—  
Murmur (for truth is hated, where not  
loved)  
As the winds fret within the Æolian cave,  
Galled by their monarch's chain. The  
times were big  
With ominous change, which, night by  
night, provoked 535  
Keen struggles, and black clouds of  
passion raised;  
But memorable moments intervened,  
When Wisdom, like the Goddess from  
Jove's brain,  
Broke forth in armour of resplendent  
words,  
Startling the Synod. Could a youth, and  
one 540  
In ancient story versed, whose breast had  
heaved  
Under the weight of classic eloquence,  
Sit, see, and hear, unthankful, uninspired?

Nor did the Pulpit's oratory fail  
To achieve its higher triumph. Not un-  
felt 545

Were its admonishments, nor lightly  
heard  
The awful truths delivered thence by  
tongues  
Endowed with various power to search  
the soul;  
Yet ostentation, domineering, oft  
Poured forth harangues, how sadly out of  
place!— 550  
There have I seen a comely bachelor,  
Fresh from a toilette of two hours, ascend  
His rostrum, with seraphic glance look up,  
And, in a tone elaborately low  
Beginning, lead his voice through many  
a maze 555  
A minuet course; and, winding up his  
mouth,  
From time to time, into an orifice  
Most delicate, a lurking eyelet, small,  
And only not invisible, again  
Open it out, diffusing thence a smile 560  
Of rapt irradiation, exquisite.  
Meanwhile the Evangelists, Isaiah, Job,  
Moses, and he who penned, the other day,  
The Death of Abel, Shakspeare, and the  
Bard  
Whose genius spangled o'er a gloomy  
theme 565  
With fancies thick as his inspiring stars,  
And Ossian (doubt not—'tis the naked  
truth)  
Summoned from streamy Morven—each  
and all  
Would, in their turns, lend ornaments  
and flowers  
To entwine the crook of eloquence that  
helped 570  
This pretty Shepherd, pride of all the  
plains,  
To rule and guide his captivated flock.

I glance but at a few conspicuous  
marks,  
Leaving a thousand others, that, in hall,  
Court, theatre, conventicle, or shop, 575  
In public room or private, park or street,  
Each fondly reared on his own pedestal,  
Looked out for admiration. Folly, vice,  
Extravagance in gesture, mien, and dress,  
And all the strife of singularity, 580  
Lies to the ear, and lies to every sense—

Of these, and of the living shapes they wear,  
 There is no end. Such candidates for regard,  
 Although well pleased to be where they were found,  
 I did not hunt after, nor greatly prize, 585  
 Nor made unto myself a secret boast  
 Of reading them with quick and curious eye;  
 But, as a common produce, things that are  
 To-day, to-morrow will be, took of them  
 Such willing note, as, on some errand bound 590  
 That asks not speed, a traveller might bestow  
 On sea-shells that bestrew the sandy beach,  
 Or daisies swarming through the fields of June.

But foolishness and madness in parade,  
 Though most at home in this their dear domain, 595  
 Are scattered everywhere, no rarities,  
 Even to the rudest novice of the Schools.  
 Me, rather, it employed, to note, and keep

In memory, those individual sights  
 Of courage, or integrity, or truth, 600  
 Or tenderness, which there, set off by foil,  
 Appeared more touching. One will I select;

A Father—for he bore that sacred name—  
 Him saw I, sitting in an open square,  
 Upon a corner-stone of that low wall, 605  
 Wherein were fixed the iron pales that fenced

A spacious grass-plot; there, in silence, sate

This One Man, with a sickly babe out-stretched

Upon his knee, whom he had thither brought

For sunshine, and to breathe the fresher air. 610

Of those who passed, and me who looked at him,

He took no heed; but in his brawny arms

(The Artificer was to the elbow bare,  
 And from his work this moment had been stolen)

He held the child, and, bending over it,  
 As if he were afraid both of the sun 616  
 And of the air, which he had come to seek,  
 Eyed the poor babe with love unutterable.

As the black storm upon the mountain-top

Sets off the sunbeam in the valley, so 620  
 That huge fermenting mass of human-kind •

Serves as a solemn background, or relief,  
 To single forms and objects, whence they draw,

For feeling and contemplative regard, 624  
 More than inherent liveliness and power.  
 How oft, amid those overflowing streets,  
 Have I gone forward with the crowd, and said

Unto myself, "The face of every one  
 That passes by me is a mystery!"

Thus have I looked, nor ceased to look, oppressed 630

By thoughts of what and whither, when and how,

Until the shapes before my eyes became  
 A second-sight procession, such as glides  
 Over still mountains, or appears in dreams;

And once, far-travelled in such mood, beyond 635

The reach of common indication, lost  
 Amid the moving pageant, I was smitten  
 Abruptly, with the view (a sight not rare)  
 Of a blind Beggar, who, with upright face,

Stood, propped against a wall, upon his chest 640

Wearing a written paper, to explain  
 His story, whence he came, and who he was.

Caught by the spectacle my mind turned round

As with the might of waters; an apt type  
 This label seemed of the utmost we can know, 645

Both of ourselves and of the universe;

And, on the shape of that unmoving man,  
His steadfast face and sightless eyes,  
I gazed,  
As if admonished from another world.

Though reared upon the base of out-  
ward things, 650  
Structures like these the excited spirit  
mainly

Builds for herself; scenes different there  
are,

Full-formed, that take, with small internal  
help,

Possession of the faculties,—the peace  
That comes with night; the deep solemn-  
ity 655

Of nature's intermediate hours of rest,  
When the great tide of human life stands  
still;

The business of the day to come, unborn,  
Of that gone by, locked up, as in the  
grave;

The blended calmness of the heavens and  
earth, 660

Moonlight and stars, and empty streets,  
and sounds

Unfrequent as in deserts; at late hours  
Of winter evenings, when unwholesome  
rains

Are falling hard, with people yet astir,  
The feeble salutation from the voice 665  
Of some unhappy woman, now and then  
Heard as we pass, when no one looks  
about,

Nothing is listened to. But these, I fear,  
Are falsely catalogued; things that are,  
are not,

As the mind answers to them, or the  
heart 670

Is prompt, or slow, to feel. What say  
you, then,

To times, when half the city shall break  
out

Full of one passion, vengeance, rage, or  
fear?

To executions, to a street on fire,  
Mobs, riots, or rejoicings? From these  
sights 675

Take one,—that ancient festival, the Fair,  
Holden where martyrs suffered in past  
time,

And named of St. Bartholomew; there,  
see

A work completed to our hands, that  
lays,

If any spectacle on earth can do, 680  
The whole creative powers of man asleep!—

For once, the Muse's help will we implore,  
And she shall lodge us, waited on her  
wings,

Above the press and danger of the crowd,  
Upon some showman's platform. What

a shock 685  
For eyes and ears! what anarchy and  
din,

Barbarian and infernal,—a phantasma,  
Monstrous in colour, motion, shape, sight,  
sound!

Below, the open space, through every  
nook

Of the wide area, twinkles, is alive 690  
With heads; the midway region, and  
above,

Is thronged with staring pictures and  
huge scrolls,

Dumb proclamations of the Prodigies;  
With chattering monkeys dangling from  
their poles,

And children whirling in their round-  
abouts; 695

With those that stretch the neck and  
strain the eyes,

And crack the voice in rivalry, the  
crowd

Inviting; with buffoons against buffoons  
Grimacing, writhing, screaming,—him  
who grinds

The hurdy-gurdy, at the fiddle weaves,  
Rattles the salt-box, thumps the kettle-

drum, 701

And him who at the trumpet puffs his  
cheeks,

The silver-collared Negro with his timbrel,  
Equestrians, tumblers, women, girls, and  
boys,

Blue-breeched, pink-vested, with high-  
towering plumes.— 705

All moveables of wonder, from all parts,  
Are here—Albinos, painted Indians,

Dwarfs,

The Horse of knowledge, and the learned  
Pig,

The Stone-eater, the man that swallows  
fire,  
Giants, Ventriloquists, the Invisible Girl,  
The Bust that speaks and moves its  
goggling eyes, 711  
The Wax-work, Clock-work, all the mar-  
vellous craft  
Of modern Merlins, Wild Beasts, Puppet-  
shows,  
All out-o'-the-way, far-fetched, perverted  
things,  
All freaks of nature, all Promethean  
thoughts 715  
Of man, his dulness, madness, and their  
feats  
All jumbled up together, to compose  
A Parliament of Monsters. Tents and  
Booths  
Meanwhile, as if the whole were one vast  
mill,  
Are vomiting, receiving on all sides, 720  
Men, Women, three-years' Children, Babes  
in arms.

Oh, blank confusion! true epitome  
Of what the mighty City is herself,  
To thousands upon thousands of her sons,  
Living amid the same perpetual whirl 725  
Of trivial objects, melted and reduced  
To one identity, by differences  
That have no law, no meaning, and no  
end—  
Oppression, under which even highest  
minds  
Must labour, whence the strongest are  
not free. 730  
But though the picture weary out the eye,  
By nature an unmanageable sight,  
It is not wholly so to him who looks  
In steadiness, who hath among least  
things 734  
An under-sense of greatest; sees the parts  
As parts, but with a feeling of the whole.  
This, of all acquisitions, first awaits  
On sundry and most widely different  
modes

Of education, nor with least delight  
On that through which I passed. At-  
tention springs, 740  
And comprehensiveness and memory flow,  
From early converse with the works of  
God  
Among all regions; chiefly where appear  
Most obviously simplicity and power.  
Think, how the everlasting streams and  
woods, 745  
Stretched and still stretching far and  
wide, exalt  
The roving Indian, on his desert sands:  
What grandeur not unfelt, what pregnant  
show  
Of beauty, meets the sun-burnt Arab's  
eye:  
And, as the sea propels, from zone to  
zone, 750  
Its currents; magnifies its shoals of life  
Beyond all compass; spreads, and sends  
aloft  
Armies of clouds,—even so, its powers  
and aspects  
Shape for mankind, by principles as fixed,  
The views and aspirations of the soul 755  
To majesty. Like virtue have the forms  
Perennial of the ancient hills; nor less  
The changeful language of their coun-  
tenances  
Quickens the slumbering mind, and aids  
the thoughts,  
However multitudinous, to move 760  
With order and relation. This, if still,  
As hitherto, in freedom I may speak,  
Not violating any just restraint,  
As may be hoped, of real modesty,—  
This did I feel, in London's vast do-  
main. 765  
The Spirit of Nature was upon me there;  
The soul of Beauty and enduring Life  
Vouchsafed her inspiration, and diffused,  
Through meagre lines and colours, and  
the press  
Of self-destroying, transitory things, 770  
Composure, and ennobling Harmony.

## • BOOK EIGHTH.

### RETROSPECT.—LOVE OF NATURE LEADING TO LOVE OF MAN.

WHAT sounds are those, Helvellyn, that  
are heard

Up to thy summit, through the depth of  
air

Ascending, as if distance had the power  
To make the sounds more audible? What  
crowd

Covers, or sprinkles o'er, yon village  
green? 5

Crowd seems it, solitary hill! to thee,  
Though but a little family of men,  
Shepherds and tillers of the ground—be-  
times

Assembled with their children and their  
wives,

And here and there a stranger inter-  
spersed. 10

They hold a rustic fair—a festival,  
Such as, on this side now, and now on  
that,

Repeated through his tributary vales,  
Helvellyn, in the silence of his rest,  
Sees annually, if clouds towards either  
ocean 15

Blown from their favourite resting-place,  
or mists

Dissolved, have left him an unshrouded  
head.

Delightful day! it is for all who dwell  
In this secluded glen, and eagerly

They give it welcome. Long ere heat of  
noon, 20

From byre or field the kine were brought;  
the sheep

Are penned in cotes; the chaffering is  
begun.

The heifer lows, uneasy at the voice  
Of a new master; bleat the flocks aloud.

Booths are there none; a stall or two is  
here; 25

A lame man or a blind, the one to beg,  
The other to make music; hither, too,  
From far, with basket, slung upon her  
arm,

Of hawkers' wares—books, pictures,  
combs, and pins—

Some aged woman finds her way again, 30  
Year after year, a punctual visitant!

There also stands a speech-maker by rote,  
Pulling the strings of his boxed raree-  
show;

And in the lapse of many years may come  
Prouder itinerant, mountebank, or he 35  
Whose wonders in a covered wain lie  
hid.

But one there is, the loveliest of them  
all,

Some sweet lass of the valley, looking out  
For gains, and who that sees her would  
not buy?

Fruits of her father's orchard are her  
wares, 40

And with the ruddy produce she walks  
round

Among the crowd, half pleased with, half  
ashamed

Of her new office, blushing restlessly.  
The children now are rich, for the old to-  
day

Are generous as the young; and, if con-  
tent 45

With looking on, some ancient wedded  
pair

Sit in the shade together, while they gaze,  
"A cheerful smile unbends the wrinkled  
brow,

The days departed start again to life,  
And all the scenes of childhood reappear,  
Faint, but more tranquil, like the  
changing sun 51

To him who slept at noon and wakes at eve<sup>1</sup>."

Thus gaiety and cheerfulness prevail,  
Spreading from young to old, from old to young,

And no one seems to want his share.—  
Immense 55

Is the recess, the circumambient world  
Magnificent, by which they are embraced:  
They move about upon the soft green turf:

How little they, they and their doings, seem,

And all that they can further or obstruct!  
Through utter weakness pitiously dear, 61  
As tender infants are: and yet how great!

For all things serve them; them the morning light

Loves, as it glistens on the silent rocks;  
And them the silent rocks, which now from high 65

Look down upon them; the reposing clouds;

The wild brooks prattling from invisible haunts;

And old Helvellyn, conscious of the stir  
Which animates this day their calm abode.

With deep devotion, Nature, did I feel,  
In that enormous City's turbulent world  
Of men and things, what benefit I owed  
To thee, and those domains of rural peace,  
Where to the sense of beauty first my heart

Was opened; tract more exquisitely fair  
Than that famed paradise of ten thousand trees, 76

Or Gehol's matchless gardens, for delight  
Of the Tartarian dynasty composed  
(Beyond that mighty wall, not fabulous,  
China's stupendous mound) by patient toil 80

Of myriads and boon nature's lavish help;  
There, in a clime from widest empire chosen,

Fulfilling (could enchantment have done more?)

A sumptuous dream of flowery lawns, with domes

Of pleasure sprinkled over, shady dells 85  
For eastern monasteries, sunny mounts  
With temples crested, bridges, gondolas,  
Rocks, dens, and groves of foliage taught to melt

Into each other their obsequious hues,  
Vanished and vanishing in subtle chase, 90  
Too fine to be pursued; or standing forth  
In no discordant opposition, strong  
And gorgeous as the colours side by side  
Bedded among rich plumes of tropic birds;

And mountains over all, embracing all; 95  
And all the landscape, endlessly enriched  
With waters running, falling, or asleep.

But lovelier far than this, the paradise  
Where I was reared; in Nature's primitive gifts

Favoured no less, and more to every sense 100

Delicious, seeing that the sun and sky,  
The elements, and seasons as they change,  
Do find a worthy fellow-labourer there—  
Man free, man working for himself, with choice

Of time, and place, and object; by his wants, 105

His comforts, native occupations, cares,  
Cheerfully led to individual ends  
Or social, and still followed by a train  
Unwooded, unthought-of even—simplicity,  
And beauty, and inevitable grace. 110

Yea, when a glimpse of those imperial bowers

Would to a child be transport over-great,  
When but a half-hour's roam through such a place

Would leave behind a dance of images,  
That shall break in upon his sleep for weeks; 115

Even then the common haunts of the green earth,

And ordinary interests of man,  
Which they embosom, all without regard  
As both may seem, are fastening on the heart

Insensibly, each with the other's help. 120

<sup>1</sup> From the *Malvern Hills* of Joseph Cottle.

For me, when my affections first were led  
 From kindred, friends, and playmates, to  
 partake  
 Love for the human creature's absolute  
 self,  
 That noticeable kindliness of heart  
 Sprang out of fountains, there abounding  
 most, 125  
 Where sovereign Nature dictated the  
 tasks  
 And occupations which her beauty  
 adorned,  
 And Shepherds were the men that pleased  
 me first;  
 Not such as Saturn ruled 'mid Latian  
 wilds,  
 With arts and laws so tempered, that  
 their lives 130  
 Left, even to us toiling in this late day,  
 A bright tradition of the golden age;  
 Not such as, 'mid Arcadian fastnesses  
 Sequestered, handed down among them-  
 selves  
 Felicity, in Grecian song renowned; 135  
 Nor such as—when an adverse fate had  
 driven,  
 From house and home, the courtly band  
 whose fortunes  
 Entered, with Shakespeare's genius, the  
 wild woods  
 Of Arden—amid sunshine or in shade  
 Culled the best fruits of Time's uncounted  
 hours, 140  
 Ere Phoebe sighed for the false Gany-  
 mede;  
 Or there where Perdita and Florizel  
 Together danced, Queen of the feast, and  
 King;  
 Nor such as Spenser fabled. True it is,  
 That I had heard (what he perhaps had  
 seen) 145  
 Of maids at sunrise bringing in from far  
 Their May-bush, and along the street in  
 flocks  
 Parading with a song of taunting rhymes,  
 Aimed at the laggards slumbering within  
 doors;  
 Had also heard, from those who yet re-  
 membered, 150  
 Tales of the May-pole dance, and wreaths  
 that decked

Porch, door-way, or kirk-pillar; and of  
 youths,  
 Each with his maid, before the sun was  
 up,  
 By annual custom, issuing forth in troops,  
 To drink the waters of some sainted well,  
 And hang it round with garlands. Love  
 survives; 155  
 But, for such purpose, flowers no longer  
 grow:  
 The times, too sage, perhaps too proud,  
 have dropped  
 These lighter graces; and the rural ways  
 And manners which my childhood looked  
 upon 160  
 Were the unluxuriant produce of a life  
 Intent on little but substantial needs,  
 Yet rich in beauty, beauty that was felt.  
 But images of danger and distress,  
 Man suffering among awful Powers and  
 Forms; 165  
 Of this I heard, and saw enough to make  
 Imagination restless; nor was free  
 Myself from frequent perils; nor were  
 tales  
 Wanting,—the tragedies of former times,  
 Hazards and strange escapes, of which  
 the rocks 170  
 Immutable, and everflowing streams,  
 Where'er I roamed, were speaking monu-  
 ments.  
 Smooth life had flock and shepherd in  
 old time,  
 Long springs and tepid winters, on the  
 banks  
 Of delicate Galesus; and no less 175  
 Those scattered along Adria's myrtle  
 shores:  
 Smooth life had herdsman, and his snow-  
 white herd  
 To triumphs and to sacrificial rites  
 Devoted, on the inviolable stream  
 Of rich Clitumnus; and the goat-herd  
 lived 180  
 As calmly, underneath the pleasant brows  
 Of cool Lucretilis, where the pipe was  
 heard  
 Of Pan, Invisible God, thrilling the rocks  
 With tutelary music, from all harm  
 The fold protecting. I myself, mature

In manhood then, have seen a pastoral  
tract 186  
Like one of these, where Fancy might  
run wild,  
Though under skies less generous, less  
serene:  
There, for her own delight had Nature  
framed  
A pleasure-ground, diffused a fair ex-  
panse 190  
Of level pasture, islanded with groves  
And banked with woody risings; but the  
Plain  
Endless, here opening widely out, and  
there  
Shut up in lesser lakes or beds of lawn  
And intricate recesses, creek or bay 195  
Sheltered within a shelter, where at large  
The shepherd strays, a rolling hut his  
home.  
Thither he comes with spring-time, there  
abides  
All summer, and at sunrise ye may hear  
His flageolet to liquid notes of love 200  
Attuned, or sprightly fife resounding far.  
Nook is there none, nor tract of that  
vast space  
Where passage opens, but the same shall  
have  
In turn its visitant, telling there his hours  
In unlaborious pleasure, with no task  
More toilsome than to carve a beechen  
bowl 206  
For spring or fountain, which the traveller  
finds,  
When through the region he pursues at  
will  
His devious course. A glimpse of such  
sweet life  
I saw when, from the melancholy walls  
Of Goslar, once imperial, I renewed 211  
My daily walk along that wide cham-  
paign,  
That, reaching to her gates, spreads east  
and west,  
And northwards, from beneath the moun-  
tainous verge  
Of the Hercynian forest. Yet, hail to  
you 215  
Moors, mountains, headlands, and ye  
hollow vales,

Ye long deep channels for the Atlantic's  
voice,  
Powers of my native region! Ye that  
seize  
The heart with firmer grasp! Your snows  
and streams  
Ungovernable, and your terrifying winds,  
That howl so dismally for him who  
treads 221  
Companionless your awful solitudes!  
There, 'tis the shepherd's task the winter  
long  
To wait upon the storms: of their  
approach  
Sagacious, into sheltering coves he drives  
His flock, and thither from the homestead  
bears 226  
A toilsome burden up the craggy ways,  
And deals it out, their regular nourish-  
ment  
Strewn on the frozen snow. And when  
the spring  
Looks out, and all the pastures dance  
with lambs, 230  
And when the flock, with warmer weather,  
climbs  
Higher and higher, him his office leads  
To watch their goings, whatsoever track  
The wanderers choose. For this he quits  
his home  
At day-spring, and no sooner doth the  
sun 235  
Begin to strike him with a fire-like heat,  
Than he lies down upon some shining  
rock,  
And breakfasts with his dog. When they  
have stolen,  
As is their wont, a pittance from strict  
time,  
For rest not needed or exchange of love,  
Then from his couch he starts; and now  
his feet 241  
Crush out a livelier fragrance from the  
flowers  
Of lowly thyme, by Nature's skill en-  
wrought  
In the wild turf: the lingering dews of  
morn  
Smoke round him, as from hill to hill he  
hies, 245  
His staff protending like a hunter's spear,

Or by its aid leaping from crag to crag,  
And o'er the brawling beds of unbridged  
streams.

Philosophy, methinks, at Fancy's call,  
Might deign to follow him through what  
he does 250

Or sees in his day's march; himself he  
feels,

In those vast regions where his service  
lies,

A freeman, wedded to his life of hope  
And hazard, and hard labour inter-  
changed

With that majestic indolence so dear 255  
To native man. A rambling schoolboy,  
thus

I felt his presence in his own domain,  
As of a lord and master, or a power,  
Or genius, under Nature, under God,  
Presiding; and severest solitude 260  
Had more commanding looks when he  
was there.

When up the lonely brooks on rainy days  
Angling I went, or trod the trackless hills  
By mists bewildered, suddenly mine eyes  
Have glanced upon him distant a few  
steps, 265

In size a giant, stalking through thick  
fog,

His sheep like Greenland bears; or, as he  
stepped

Beyond the boundary line of some hill-  
shadow,

His form hath flashed upon me, glorified  
By the deep radiance of the setting sun:  
Or him have I descried in distant sky, 271  
A solitary object and sublime,  
Above all height! like an aerial cross  
Stationed alone upon a spiry rock

Of the Chartreuse, for worship. Thus  
was man 275

Ennobled outwardly before my sight,  
And thus my heart was early introduced  
To an unconscious love and reverence  
Of human nature; hence the human form  
To me became an index of delight, 280  
Of grace and honour, power and worthi-  
ness.

Meanwhile this creature—spiritual almost  
As those of books, but more exalted far;  
Far more of an imaginative form

Than the gay Corin of the groves, who  
lives 285

For his own fancies, or to dance by the  
hour,

In coronal, with Phyllis in the midst—  
Was, for the purposes of kind, a man

With the most common; husband, father;  
learned,

Could teach, admonish; suffered with the  
rest 290

From vice and folly, wretchedness and  
fear;

Of this I little saw, cared less for it,  
But something must have felt.

Call ye these appearances—  
Which I beheld of shepherds in my  
youth,

This sanctity of Nature given to man—  
A shadow, a delusion, ye who pore 296

On the dead letter, miss the spirit of  
things;

Whose truth is not a motion or a shape  
Instinct with vital functions, but a block  
Or waxen image which yourselves have  
made, 300

And ye adore! But blessed be the God  
Of Nature and of Man that this was so;  
That men before my inexperienced eyes  
Did first present themselves thus purified,  
Removed, and to a distance that was fit:  
And so we all of us in some degree 306

Are led to knowledge, wheresoever led,  
And howsoever; were it otherwise,  
And we found evil fast as we find good  
In our first years, or think that it is found,  
How could the innocent heart bear up  
and live! 311

But doubly fortunate my lot; not here  
Alone, that something of a better life  
Perhaps was round me than it is the  
privilege

Of most to move in, but that first I  
looked 315

At man through objects that were great  
or fair;

First communed with him by their help.  
And thus

Was founded a sure safeguard and de-  
fence

Against the weight of meanness, selfish  
cares,

Coarse manners, vulgar passions, that  
beat in 320  
On all sides from the ordinary world  
In which we traffic. Starting from this  
point  
I had my face turned toward the truth,  
began  
With an advantage furnished by that  
kind  
Of prepossession, without which the soul  
Receives no knowledge that can bring  
forth good, 325  
No genuine insight ever comes to her.  
From the restraint of over-watchful eyes  
Preserved, I moved about, year after year,  
Happy, and now most thankful that my  
walk 330  
Was guarded from too early intercourse  
With the deformities of crowded life,  
And those ensuing laughters and con-  
tempt,  
Self-pleasing, which, if we would wish to  
think  
With a due reverence on earth's rightful  
lord, 335  
Here placed to be the inheritor of  
heaven,  
Will not permit us; but pursue the mind,  
That to devotion willingly would rise,  
Into the temple and the temple's heart.

Yet deem not, Friend! that human  
kind with me 340  
Thus early took a place pre-eminent;  
Nature herself was, at this unripe time,  
But secondary to my own pursuits  
And animal activities, and all  
Their trivial pleasures; and when these  
had drooped 345  
And gradually expired, and Nature,  
prized  
For her own sake, became my joy, even  
then—  
And upwards through late youth, until  
not less  
Than two-and-twenty summers had been  
told—  
Was Man in my affections and regards  
Subordinate to her, her visible forms 351  
And viewless agencies: a passion, she,  
A rapture often, and immediate love

Ever at hand; he, only a delight  
Occasional, an accidental grace, 355  
His hour being not yet come. Far less  
had then  
The inferior creatures, beast or bird,  
attuned  
My spirit to that gentleness of love  
(Though they had long been carefully  
observed), 359  
Won from me those minute obeisances  
Of tenderness, which I may number now  
With my first blessings. Nevertheless,  
on these  
The light of beauty did not fall in vain,  
Or grandeur circumscribe them to no end.

But when that first poetic faculty 365  
Of plain Imagination and severe,  
No longer a mute influence of the soul,  
Ventured, at some rash Muse's earnest  
call,  
To try her strength among harmonious  
words;  
And to book-notions and the rules of art  
Did knowingly conform itself; there  
came 371  
Among the simple shapes of human life  
A wilfulness of fancy and conceit:  
And Nature and her objects beautified  
These fictions, as in some sort, in their  
turn, 375  
They burnished her. From touch of this  
new power  
Nothing was safe: the elder-tree that  
grew  
Beside the well-known charnel-house had  
then  
A dismal look; the yew-tree had its  
ghost, 379  
That took his station there for ornament:  
The dignities of plain occurrence then  
Were tasteless, and truth's golden mean,  
a point  
Where no sufficient pleasure could be  
found.  
Then, if a widow, staggering with the  
blow  
Of her distress, was known to have turned  
her steps 385  
To the cold grave in which her husband  
slept,

One night, or haply more than one,  
 through pain  
 Or half-insensate impotence of mind,  
 The fact was caught at greedily, and  
 there  
 She must be visitant the whole year  
 through, 390  
 Wetting the turf with never-ending tears.

Through quaint obliquities I might  
 pursue  
 These cravings; when the foxglove, one  
 by one,  
 Upwards through every stage of the tall  
 stem, 394  
 Had shed beside the public way its bells,  
 And stood of all dismantled, save the last  
 Left at the tapering ladder's top, that  
 seemed  
 To bend as doth a slender blade of grass  
 Tipped with a rain-drop, Fancy loved to  
 seat,  
 Beneath the plant despoiled, but crested  
 still 400  
 With this last relic, soon itself to fall,  
 Some vagrant mother, whose arch little  
 ones,  
 All unconcerned by her dejected plight,  
 Laughed as with rival eagerness their  
 hands  
 Gathered the purple cups that round  
 them lay, 405  
 Strewing the turf's green slope.

A diamond light  
 (Whene'er the summer sun, declining,  
 smote  
 A smooth rock wet with constant springs)  
 was seen  
 Sparkling from out a copse-clad bank  
 that rose  
 Fronting our cottage. Oft beside the  
 hearth 410  
 Seated, with open door, often and long  
 Upon this restless lustre have I gazed,  
 That made my fancy restless as itself.  
 'Twas now for me a burnished silver  
 shield 414  
 Suspended over a knight's tomb, who lay  
 Inglorious, buried in the dusky wood:  
 An entrance now into some magic cave  
 Or palace built by fairies of the rock;

Nor could I have been bribed to disen-  
 chant  
 The spectacle, by visiting the spot. 420  
 Thus wilful Fancy, in no hurtful mood,  
 Engraffed far-fetched shapes on feelings  
 bred  
 By pure Imagination: busy Power  
 She was, and with her ready pupil  
 turned  
 Instinctively to human passions, then  
 Least understood. Yet, 'mid the fervent  
 swarm 426  
 Of these vagaries, with an eye so rich  
 As mine was through the bounty of a  
 grand  
 And lovely region, I had forms distinct  
 To steady me: each airy thought re-  
 volved 430  
 Round a substantial centre, which at  
 once  
 Incited it to motion, and controlled.  
 I did not pine like one in cities bred,  
 As was thy melancholy lot, dear Friend!  
 Great Spirit as thou art, in endless  
 dreams 435  
 Of sickness, disjoining, joining, things  
 Without the light of knowledge. Where  
 the harm,  
 If, when the woodman languished with  
 disease  
 Induced by sleeping nightly on the  
 ground 439  
 Within his sod-built cabin, Indian-wise,  
 I called the pangs of disappointed love,  
 And all the sad etcetera of the wrong,  
 To help him to his grave? Meanwhile the  
 man,  
 If not already from the woods retired  
 To die at home, was haply as I knew,  
 Withering by slow degrees, 'mid gentle  
 airs, 446  
 Birds, running streams, and hills so  
 beautiful  
 On golden evenings, while the charcoal  
 pile  
 Breathed up its smoke, an image of his  
 ghost  
 Or spirit that full soon must take her  
 flight. 450  
 Nor shall we not be tending towards that  
 point

Of sound humanity to which our Tale  
Leads, though by sinuous ways, if here  
I show

How Fancy, in a season when she wove  
Those slender cords, to guide the uncon-  
scious Boy 455

For the Man's sake, could feed at Na-  
ture's call

Some pensive musings which might well  
beseem

Maturer years.

A grove there is whose boughs  
Stretch from the western marge of Thur-  
ston-mere,

With length of shade so thick, that whose  
glides 460

Along the line of low-roofed water, moves  
As in a cloister. Once—while, in that  
shade

Loitering, I watched the golden beams of  
light

Flung from the setting sun, as they  
reposed

In silent beauty on the naked ridge 465  
Of a high eastern hill—thus flowed my  
thoughts

In a pure stream of words fresh from the  
heart:

Dear native Regions, wheresoe'er shall  
close

My mortal course, there will I think on  
you; 469

Dying, will cast on you a backward look;  
Even as this setting sun (albeit the Vale  
Is no where touched by one memorial  
gleam)

Doth with the fond remains of his last  
power

Still linger, and a farewell lustre sheds  
On the dear mountain-tops where first he  
rose. 475

Enough of humble arguments; recall,  
My Song! those high emotions which thy  
voice

Has heretofore made known; that burst-  
ing forth

Of sympathy, inspiring and inspired,  
When everywhere a vital pulse was felt,  
And all the several frames of things, like  
stars, 481

Through every magnitude distinguish-  
able,

Shone mutually indebted, or half lost  
Each in the other's blaze, a galaxy  
Of life and glory. In the midst stood  
Man, 485

Outwardly, inwardly contemplated,  
As, of all visible natures, crown, though  
born

Of dust, and kindred to the worm; a  
Being,

Both in perception and discernment, first  
In every capability of rapture, 490

Through the divine effect of power and  
love;\*

As, more than anything we know, in-  
stinct

With godhead, and, by reason and by  
will,

Acknowledging dependency sublime.

Ere long, the lonely mountains left,  
I moved, 495

Begirt, from day to day, with temporal  
shapes

Of vice and folly thrust upon my view,  
Objects of sport, and ridicule, and scorn,  
Manners and characters discriminate,  
And little bustling passions that eclipse,  
As well they might, the impersonated  
thought, 501

The idea, or abstraction of the kind.

An Idler among academic bowers,  
Such was my new condition, as at large  
Has been set forth; yet here the vulgar  
light 505

Of present, actual, superficial life,  
Gleaming through colouring of other  
times,

Old usages and local privilege,  
Was welcome, softened, if not solemnised.  
This notwithstanding, being brought  
more near 510

To vice and guilt, forerunning wretched-  
ness,

I trembled,—thought, at times, of human  
life

With an indefinite terror and dismay,  
Such as the storms and angry elements  
Had bred in me; but gloomier far, a dim

Analogy to uproar and misrule,  
Disquiet, danger, and obscurity. 516

It might be told (but wherefore speak  
of things  
Common to all?) that, seeing, I was led  
Gravely to ponder—judging between good  
And evil, not as for the mind's delight  
But for her guidance—one who was to *act*,  
As sometimes to the best of feeble means  
I did, by human sympathy impelled;  
And, through dislike and most offensive  
pain, 525  
Was to the truth conducted; of this  
faith  
Never forsaken, that, by acting well,  
And understanding, I should learn to love  
The end of life, and everything we know.

Grave Teacher, stern Preceptress! for  
at times 530  
Thou canst put on an aspect most severe;  
London, to thee I willingly return.  
Erewhile my verse played idly with the  
flowers  
Enwrought upon thy mantle; satisfied  
With that amusement, and a simple look  
Of child-like inquisition now and then  
Cast upwards on thy countenance, to  
detect  
Some inner meanings which might har-  
bour there.  
But how could I in mood so light indulge,  
Keeping such fresh remembrance of the  
day, 540  
When, having thridded the long labyrinth  
Of the suburban villages, I first  
Entered thy vast dominion? On the roof  
Of an itinerant vehicle I sate,  
With vulgar men about me, trivial forms  
Of houses, pavement, streets, of men and  
things,— 546  
Mean shapes on every side: but, at the  
instant,  
When to myself it fairly might be said,  
The threshold now is overpast, (how  
strange  
That aught external to the living mind  
Should have such mighty sway! yet so it  
was), 551  
A weight of ages did at once descend

Upon my heart; no thought embodied,  
no  
Distinct remembrances, but weight and  
power,—  
Power growing under weight: alas! I  
feel 555  
That I am trifling: 'twas a moment's  
pause,—  
All that took place within me came and  
went  
As in a moment; yet with Time it dwells,  
And grateful memory, as a thing divine.

The curious traveller, who, from open  
day, 560  
Hath passed with torches into some huge  
cave,  
The Grotto of Antiparos, or the Den  
In old time haunted by that Danish  
Witch,  
Yordas; he looks around and sees the  
vault  
Widening on all sides; sees, or thinks he  
sees, 565  
Erelong, the massy roof above his head,  
That instantly unsettles and recedes,—  
Substance and shadow, light and dark-  
ness, all  
Commingled, making up a canopy  
Of shapes and forms and tendencies to  
shape 570  
That shift and vanish, change and inter-  
change  
Like spectres,—ferment silent and sub-  
lime!  
That after a short space works less and  
less,  
Till, every effort, every motion gone,  
The scene before him stands in perfect  
view 575  
Exposed, and lifeless as a written book!—  
But let him pause awhile, and look again,  
And a new quickening shall succeed, at  
first  
Beginning timidly, then creeping fast,  
Till the whole cave, so late a senseless  
mass, 580  
Busies the eye with images and forms  
Boldly assembled, — here is shadowed  
forth  
From the projections, wrinkles, cavities,

A variegated landscape,—there the shape  
Of some gigantic warrior clad in mail, 585  
The ghostly semblance of a hooded monk,  
Veiled nun, or pilgrim resting on his  
staff:

Strange congregation! yet not slow to  
meet

Eyes that perceive through minds that  
can inspire.

Even in such sort had I at first been  
moved, 590

Nor otherwise continued to be moved,  
As I explored the vast metropolis,  
Fount of my country's destiny and the  
world's;

That great emporium, chronicle at once  
And burial-place of passions, and their  
home 595

Imperial, their chief living residence.

With strong sensations teeming as it  
did

Of past and present, such a place must  
needs

Have pleased me, seeking knowledge at  
that time

Far less than craving power; yet know-  
ledge came, 600

Sought or unsought, and influxes of  
power

Came, of themselves, or at her call de-  
rived

In fits of kindest apprehensiveness,  
From all sides, when whate'er was in  
itself

Capacious found, or seemed to find, in  
me 605

A correspondent amplitude of mind;  
Such is the strength and glory of our  
youth!

The human nature unto which I felt  
That I belonged, and revered with  
love,

Was not a punctual presence, but a spirit  
Diffused through time and space, with  
aid derived 611

Of evidence from monuments, erect,  
Prostrate, or leaning towards their com-  
mon rest

In earth, the widely scattered wreck  
sublime

Of vanished nations, or more clearly  
drawn 615  
From books and what they picture and  
record.

'Tis true, the history of our native land,  
With those of Greece compared and  
popular Rome,

And in our high-wrought modern narra-  
tives

Strip of their harmonising soul, the life  
Of manners and familiar incidents, 621  
Had never much delighted me. And  
less

Than other intellects had mine been used  
To lean upon extrinsic circumstance  
Of record or tradition; but a sense 625  
Of what in the Great City had been done  
And suffered, and was doing, suffering,  
still,

Weighed with me, could support the test  
of thought;

And, in despite of all that had gone by,  
Or was departing never to return, 630  
There I conversed with majesty and  
power

Like independent natures. Hence the  
place

Was thronged with impregnations like  
the Wilds

In which my early feelings had been  
nursed—

Bare hills and valleys, full of caverns,  
rocks, 635

And audible seclusions, dashing lakes,  
Echoes and waterfalls, and pointed crags  
That into music touch the passing wind.

Here then my young imagination found  
No uncongenial element; could here 640

Among new objects serve for give com-  
mand,

Even as the heart's occasions might re-  
quire,

To forward reason's else too scrupulous  
march.

The effect was, still more elevated views  
Of human nature. Neither vice nor guilt,  
Debasement undergone by body or mind,  
Nor all the misery forced upon my sight,  
Misery not lightly passed, but sometimes  
scanned 648

Most feelingly, could overthrow my trust  
In what we *may* become; induce belief  
That I was ignorant, had been falsely  
taught, 651

A solitary, who with vain conceits  
Had been inspired, and walked about in  
dreams.

From those sad scenes when meditation  
turned,

Lo! everything that was indeed divine  
Retained its purity inviolate, 656  
Nay brighter shone, by this portentous  
gloom

Set off; such opposition as aroused  
The mind of Adam, yet in Paradise  
Though fallen from bliss, when in the  
East he saw 660

Darkness ere day's mid course, and morn-  
ing light

More orient in the western cloud, that  
drew

O'er the blue firmament a radiant white,  
Descending slow with something heavenly  
fraught. 664

Add also, that among the multitudes  
Of that huge city, oftentimes was seen  
Affectingly set forth, more than else-  
where

Is possible, the unity of man,  
One spirit over ignorance and vice  
Predominant in good and evil hearts;  
One sense for moral judgments, as one  
eye 671

For the sun's light. The soul when  
smitten thus

By a sublime *idea*, whence so'er  
Vouchsafed for union or communion,  
feeds

On the pure bliss, and takes her rest with  
God. 675

Thus from a very early age, O Friend!  
My thoughts by slow gradations had  
been drawn

To human-kind, and to the good and ill  
Of human life: Nature had led me on;  
And oft amid the "busy hum" I seemed  
To travel independent of her help, 681  
As if I had forgotten her; but no,

The world of human-kind outweighed not  
hers

In my habitual thoughts; the scale of  
love,

Though filling daily, still was light, com-  
pared 685

With that in which *her* mighty objects  
lay.

## BOOK NINTH.

### RESIDENCE IN FRANCE.

EVEN as a river,—partly (it might seem)  
Yielding to old remembrances, and  
swayed

In part by fear to shape a way direct,  
That would engulf him soon in the  
ravenous sea—

Turns, and will measure back his course,  
far back, 5

Seeking the very regions which he crossed  
In his first outset; so have we, my  
Friend!

Turned and returned with intricate de-  
lay.

Or as a traveller, who has gained the brow  
Of some aerial Down, while there he halts  
For breathing-time, is tempted to review  
The region left behind him; and, if  
aught 12

Deserving notice have escaped regard,  
Or been regarded with too careless eye,  
Strives, from that height, with one and  
yet one more 15

Last look, to make the best amends he  
may:

So have we lingered. Now we start  
afresh

With courage, and new hope risen on our  
 toil.  
 Fair greetings to this shapeless eagerness,  
 Whene'er it comes! needful in work so  
 long, 20  
 Thrice needful to the argument which  
 now  
 Awaits us! Oh, how much unlike the  
 past!

Free as a colt at pasture on the hill,  
 I ranged at large, through London's wide  
 domain,  
 Month after month. Obscurely did I  
 live, 25  
 Not seeking frequent intercourse with  
 men,  
 By literature, or elegance, or rank,  
 Distinguished. Scarcely was a year thus  
 spent  
 Ere I forsook the crowded solitude, 9  
 With less regret for its luxurious pomp,  
 And all the nicely-guarded shows of art,  
 Than for the humble book-stalls in the  
 streets,  
 Exposed to eye and hand where'er I  
 turned.

France lured me forth; the realm that  
 I had crossed  
 So lately, journeying toward the snow-  
 clad Alps. 35  
 But now, relinquishing the scrip and  
 staff,  
 And all enjoyment which the summer sun  
 Sheds round the steps of those who meet  
 the day  
 With motion constant as his own, I went  
 Prepared to sojourn in a pleasant town,  
 Washed by the current of the stately  
 Loire. 41

Through Paris lay my readiest course,  
 and there  
 Sojourning a few days, I visited  
 In haste, each spot of old or recent fame,  
 The latter chiefly; from the field of Mars  
 Down to the suburbs of St. Antony, 46  
 And from Mont Martre southward to  
 the Dome  
 Of Geneviève. In both her clamorous  
 Halls,

The National Synod and the Jacobins,  
 I saw the Revolutionary Power 50  
 Toss like a ship at anchor, rocked by  
 storms;  
 The Arcades I traversed, in the Palace  
 huge  
 Of Orleans; coasted round and round the  
 line  
 Of Tavern, Brothel, Gaming-house, and  
 Shop,  
 Great rendezvous of worst and best, the  
 walk 55  
 Of all who had a purpose, or had not;  
 I stared and listened, with a stranger's  
 ears,  
 To Hawkers and Haranguers, hubbub  
 wild!  
 And hissing Factionists with ardent eyes,  
 In knots, or pairs, or single. Not a look  
 Hope takes, or Doubt or Fear is forced  
 to wear, 61  
 But seemed there present; and I scanned  
 them all,  
 Watched every gesture uncontrollable,  
 Of anger, and vexation, and despite,  
 All side by side, and struggling face to  
 face, 65  
 With gaiety and dissolute idleness.

Where silent zephyrs sported with the  
 dust  
 Of the Bastille, I sate in the open sun,  
 And from the rubbish gathered up a stone,  
 And pocketed the relic, in the guise 70  
 Of an enthusiast; yet, in honest truth,  
 I looked for something that I could not  
 find,  
 Affecting more emotion than I felt;  
 For 'tis most certain, that these various  
 sights, 75  
 However potent their first shock, with  
 me  
 Appeared to recompense the traveller's  
 pains  
 Less than the painted Magdalene of Le  
 Brun,  
 A beauty exquisitely wrought, with hair  
 Dishevelled, gleaming eyes, and rueful  
 cheek  
 Pale and bedropped with everflowing  
 tears. 80

But hence to my more permanent abode  
 I hasten ; there, by novelties in speech,  
 Domestic manners, customs, gestures,  
 looks,  
 And all the attire of ordinary life,  
 Attention was engrossed ; and, thus  
 amused, 85  
 I stood, 'mid those concussions, uncon-  
 cerned,  
 Tranquil almost, and careless as a flower  
 Glassed in a greenhouse, or a parlour  
 shrub  
 That spreads its leaves in unmolested  
 peace,  
 While every bush and tree, the country  
 through, 90  
 Is shaking to the roots : indifference this  
 Which may seem strange : but I was un-  
 prepared  
 With needful knowledge, had abruptly  
 passed  
 Into a theatre, whose stage was filled  
 And busy with an action far advanced.  
 Like others, I had skimmed, and some-  
 times read 96  
 With care, the master-pamphlets of the  
 day ;  
 Nor wanted such half-insight as grew  
 wild  
 Upon that meagre soil, helped out by  
 talk 99  
 And public news ; but having never seen  
 A chronicle that might suffice to show  
 Whence the main organs of the public  
 power  
 Had sprung, their transmigrations, when  
 and how  
 Accomplished, giving thus unto events  
 A form and body ; all things were to me  
 Loose and disjointed, and the affections  
 left 106  
 Without a vital interest. At that time,  
 Moreover, the first storm was overblown,  
 And the strong hand of outward violence  
 Looked up in quiet. For myself, I fear  
 Now in connection with so great a theme  
 To speak (as I must be compelled to do)  
 Of one so unimportant ; night by night  
 Did I frequent the formal haunts of men,  
 Whom, in the city, privilege of birth 115  
 Sequestered from the rest, societies

Polished in arts, and in punctilio versed ;  
 Whence, and from deeper causes, all dis-  
 course  
 Of good and evil of the time was shunned  
 With scrupulous care ; but these restric-  
 tions soon 120  
 Proved tedious, and I gradually with-  
 drew  
 Into a noisier world, and thus ere long  
 Became a patriot ; and my heart was all  
 Given to the people, and my love was  
 theirs.

A band of military Officers, 125  
 Then stationed in the city, were the chief  
 Of my associates : some of these wore  
 swords  
 That had been seasoned in the wars, and  
 all

Were men well-born ; the chivalry of  
 France.

In age and temper differing, they had yet  
 One spirit ruling in each heart ; alike 131  
 (Save only one, hereafter to be named)  
 Were bent upon undoing what was done :  
 This was their rest and only hope ; there-  
 with

No fear had they of bad becoming worse,  
 For worst to them was come ; nor would  
 have stirred, 136

Or deemed it worth a moment's thought  
 to stir,

In anything, save only as the act  
 Looked thitherward. One, reckoning by  
 years,

Was in the prime of manhood, and ere-  
 while 140

He had sate lord in many tender hearts ;  
 Though heedless of such honours now,  
 and changed :

His temper was quite mastered by the  
 times,

And they had blighted him, had eaten  
 away

The beauty of his person, doing wrong  
 Alike to body and to mind : his port, 146  
 Which once had been erect and open, now  
 Was stooping and contracted, and a face,  
 Endowed by Nature with her fairest gifts  
 Of symmetry and light and bloom, ex-  
 pressed, 150

As much as any that was ever seen,  
 A ravage out of season, made by thoughts  
 Unhealthy and vexatious. With the  
 hour,  
 That from the press of Paris duly brought  
 Its freight of public news, the fever  
 came, 155

A punctual visitant, to shake this man,  
 Disarmed his voice and fanned his yellow  
 cheek

Into a thousand colours; while he read,  
 Or mused, his sword was haunted by his  
 touch

Continually, like an uneasy place 160  
 In his own body. 'Twas in truth an hour  
 Of universal ferment; mildest men  
 Were agitated; and commotions, strife  
 Of passions and opinions, filled the walls  
 Of peaceful houses with unquiet sounds.  
 The soil of common life, was, at that  
 time, 166

Too hot to tread upon. Oft said I then,  
 And not then only, "What a mockery  
 this

Of history, the past and that to come!  
 Now do I feel how all men are deceived,  
 Reading of nations and their works, in  
 faith, 171

Faith given to vanity and emptiness;  
 Oh! laughter for the page that would  
 reflect

To future times the face of what now is!"  
 The land all swarmed with passion, like  
 a plain 175

Devoured by locusts,—Carra, Gorsas,—  
 add

A hundred other names, forgotten now,  
 Nor to be heard of more; yet, they were  
 powers,

Like earthquakes, shocks repeated day  
 by day,

And felt through every nook of town and  
 field. 180

Such was the state of things. Mean-  
 while the chief

Of my associates stood prepared for flight  
 To augment the band of emigrants in  
 arms

Upon the borders of the Rhine, and  
 leagued

With foreign foes mustered for instant  
 war. 185

This was their undisguised intent, and  
 they

Were waiting<sup>9</sup> with the whole of their  
 desires

The moment to depart.

An Englishman,  
 Born in a land whose very name appeared  
 To license some unruliness of mind; 190  
 A stranger, with youth's further privilege,  
 And the indulgence that a half-learn't  
 speech

Wins from the courteous; I, who had  
 been else

Shunned and not tolerated, freely lived  
 With these defenders of the Crown, and  
 talked, 195

And heard their notions; nor did they  
 disdain

The wish to bring me over to their cause.

But though untaught by thinking or by  
 books

To reason well of polity or law,  
 And nice distinctions, then on every  
 tongue, 200

Of natural rights and civil; and to acts  
 Of nations and their passing interests,  
 (If with unworldly ends and aims com-  
 pared)

Almost indifferent, even the historian's  
 tale 204

Prizing but little otherwise than I prized  
 Tales of the poets, as it made the heart  
 Beat high, and filled the fancy with fair  
 forms,

Old heroes and their sufferings and their  
 deeds;

Yet in the regal sceptre, and the pomp  
 Of orders and degrees, I nothing found  
 Then, or had ever, even in crudest youth,  
 That dazzled me, but rather what I  
 mourned

And ill could brook, beholding that the  
 best

Ruled not, and feeling that they ought to  
 rule.

For, born in a poor district, and which  
 yet 215

Retaineth more of ancient homeliness,

Than any other nook of English ground,  
It was my fortune scarcely to have seen,  
Through the whole tenour of my school-  
day time,

The face of one, who, whether boy or  
man, 220

Was vested with attention or respect  
Through claims of wealth or blood; nor  
was it least

Of many benefits, in later years  
Derived from academic institutes  
And rules, that they held something up  
to view 225

Of a Republic, where all stood thus far  
Upon equal ground; that we were bro-  
thers all

In honour, as in one community,  
Scholars and gentlemen; where, further-  
more,

Distinction open lay to all that came, 230  
And wealth and titles were in less esteem  
Than talents, worth, and prosperous in-  
dustry.

Add unto this, subservience from the  
first

To presences of God's mysterious power  
Made manifest in Nature's sovereignty,  
And fellowship with venerable books, 236  
To sanction the proud workings of the  
soul,

And mountain liberty. It could not be  
But that one tutored thus should look  
with awe

Upon the faculties of man, receive 240  
Gladly the highest promises, and hail,  
As best, the government of equal rights  
And individual worth. And hence, O  
Friend!

If at the first great outbreak I rejoiced  
Less than might well befit my youth, the  
cause 245

In part lay here, that unto me the events  
Seemed nothing out of nature's certain  
course,

A gift that was come rather late than  
soon.

No wonder, then, if advocates like these,  
Inflamed by passion, blind with pre-  
judice, 250

And stung with injury, at this riper day,  
Were impotent to make my hopes put on

The shape of theirs, my understanding  
bend

In honour to their honour: zeal, which  
yet 254

Had slumbered, now in opposition burst  
Forth like a Polar summer: every word  
They uttered was a dart, by counter-  
winds

Blown back upon themselves; their reason  
seemed

Confusion-stricken by a higher power  
Than human understanding, their dis-  
course 260

Maimed, spiritless; and, in their weak-  
ness strong,

I triumphed.

Meantime, day by day, the roads  
Were crowded with the bravest youth of  
France,

And all the promptest of her spirits,  
linked

In gallant soldiery, and posting on  
To meet the war upon her frontier  
bounds. 266

Yet at this very moment do tears start  
Into mine eyes: I do not say I weep—  
I wept not then,—but tears have dimmed  
my sight,

In memory of the farewells of that time,  
Domestic severings, female fortitude 271

At dearest separation, patriot love  
And self-devotion, and terrestrial hope,  
Encouraged with a martyr's confidence;

Even files of strangers merely seen but  
once, 275

And for a moment, men from far with  
sound

Of music, martial tunes, and banners  
spread,

Entering the city, here and there a face,  
Or person singled out among the rest,  
Yet still a stranger and beloved as such;  
Even by these passing spectacles my  
heart 281

Was oftentimes uplifted, and they seemed  
Arguments sent from Heaven to prove  
the cause

Good, pure, which no one could stand up  
against,

Who was not lost, abandoned, selfish,  
proud, 285

Mean, miserable, wilfully depraved,  
Hater perverse of equity and truth.

Among that band of Officers was one,  
Already hinted at<sup>1</sup>, of other mould—  
A patriot, thence rejected by the rest, 290  
And with an oriental loathing spurned,  
As of a different caste. A meeker man  
Than this lived never, nor a more benign,  
Meek though enthusiastic. Injuries  
Made *him* more gracious, and his nature  
then 295

Did breathe its sweetness out most sensibly,

As aromatic flowers on Alpine turf,  
When foot hath crushed them. He  
through the events

Of that great change wandered in perfect faith,

As through a book, an old romance, or tale 300

Of Fairy, or some dream of actions wrought

Behind the summer clouds. By birth he ranked

With the most noble, but unto the poor  
Among mankind he was in service bound,  
As by some tie invisible, oaths professed  
To a religious order. Man he loved 306  
As man; and, to the mean and the obscure,

And all the homely in their homely works,  
Transferred a courtesy which had no air  
Of condescension; but did rather seem  
A passion and a gallantry, like that 311  
Which he, a soldier, in his idler day  
Had paid to woman: somewhat vain he was,

Or seemed so, yet it was not vanity,  
But fondness, and a kind of radiant joy  
Diffused around him, while he was in-  
tent 316

On works of love or freedom, or revolved  
Complacently the progress of a cause,  
Whereof he was a part: yet this was meek

And placid, and took nothing from the man 320

That was delightful. Oft in solitude

With him did I discourse about the end  
Of civil government, and its wisest forms;  
Of ancient loyalty, and chartered rights,  
Custom and habit, novelty and change;  
Of self-respect, and virtue in the few 325  
For patrimonial honour set apart,  
And ignorance in the labouring multitude.  
For he, to all intolerance indisposed,  
Balanced these contemplations in his  
mind; 330

And I, who at that time was scarcely dipped

Into the turmoil, bore a sounder judgment  
Than later days allowed; carried about me,  
With less alloy to its integrity,

The experience of past ages, as, through help 335

Of books and common life, it makes sure way

To youthful minds, by objects over near  
Not pressed upon, nor dazzled or misled  
By struggling with the crowd for present ends.

But though not deaf, nor obstinate to find 340

Error without excuse upon the side  
Of them who strove against us, more delight

We took, and let this freely be confessed,  
In painting to ourselves the miseries 344  
Of royal courts, and that voluptuous life  
Unfeeling, where the man who is of soul  
The meanest thrives the most; where dignity,

True personal dignity, abideth not;  
A light, a cruel, and vain world cut off  
From the natural inlets of just sentiment,  
From lowly sympathy and chastening truth: 351

Where good and evil interchange their names,

And thirst for bloody spoils abroad is paired

With vice at home. We added dearest themes—

Man and his noble nature, as it is 355  
The gift which God has placed within his power,

His blind desires and steady faculties  
Capable of clear truth, the one to break

<sup>1</sup> See line 132, p. 711.—Ed.

Bondage, the other to build liberty  
On firm foundations, making social life,  
Through knowledge spreading and im-  
perishable, 361  
As just in regulation, and as pure  
As individual in the wise and good.

We summoned up the honourable deeds  
Of ancient Story, thought of each bright  
spot, 365  
That would be found in all recorded time,  
Of truth preserved and error passed  
away;

Of single spirits that catch the flame  
from Heaven,  
And how the multitudes of men will feed  
And fan each other; thought of sects,  
how keen 370

They are to put the appropriate nature on,  
Triumphant over every obstacle  
Of custom, language, country, love, or  
hate,

And what they do and suffer for 'their  
creed;

How far they travel, and how long en-  
dure; 375

How quickly mighty Nations have been  
formed,

From least beginnings; how, together  
locked

By new opinions, scattered tribes have  
made

One body, spreading wide as clouds in  
heaven.

To aspirations then of our own minds 380  
Did we appeal; and, finally, beheld  
A living confirmation of the whole  
Before us, in a people from the depth  
Of shameful imbecility uprisen,  
Fresh as the morning star. Elate we  
looked 385

Upon their virtues; saw, in rudest men,  
Self-sacrifice the firmest; generous love,  
And continence of mind, and sense of  
right,

Uppermost in the midst of fiercest strife.

Oh, sweet it is, in academic groves, 390  
Or such retirement, Friend! as we have  
known

In the green dales beside our Rotha's  
stream,

Greta, or Derwent, or some nameless rill,  
To ruminate, with interchange of talk,  
On rational liberty, and hope in man, 395  
Justice and peace. But far more sweet  
such toil—

Toil, say I, for it leads to thoughts ab-  
struse—

If nature then be standing on the brink  
Of some great trial, and we hear the voice  
Of one devoted,—one whom circumstance  
Hath called upon to embody his deep  
sense

In action, give it outwardly a shape,  
And that of benediction, to the world.  
Then doubt is not, and truth is more  
than truth,—

A hope it is, and a desire; a creed 405  
Of zeal, by an authority Divine  
Sanctioned, of danger, difficulty, or death.  
Such conversation, under Attic shades,  
Did Dion hold with Plato; ripened thus  
For a deliverer's glorious task,—and such  
He, on that ministry already bound, 415  
Held with Eudemus and Timonides,  
Surrounded by adventurers in arms,  
When those two vessels with their daring  
freight,

For the Sicilian Tyrant's overthrow, 415  
Sailed from Zacynthus,—philosophic war,  
Led by Philosophers. With harder fate,  
Though like ambition, such was he, O  
Friend!

Of whom I speak. So BEAUPUY (let the  
name

Stand near the worthiest of Antiquity)  
Fashioned his life; and many a long dis-  
course, 421

With like persuasion honoured, we main-  
tained:

He, on his part, accoutred for the worst,  
He perished fighting, in supreme com-  
mand,

Upon the borders of the unhappy Loire<sup>1</sup>,  
For liberty, against deluded men, 426  
His fellow country-men; and yet most  
blessed

In this, that he the fate of later times

<sup>1</sup> An error. Beaupuy died at Emmendingen, shot while in command of a division of the Army of the Rhine and the Moselle.—ED.

Lived not to see, nor what we now behold,  
Who have as ardent hearts as he had  
then<sup>1</sup>. 430

Along that very Loire, with festal mirth  
Resounding at all hours, and innocent yet  
Of civil slaughter, was our frequent walk;  
Or in wide forests of continuous shade,  
Lofty and over-arched, with open space  
Beneath the trees, clear footing many  
a mile— 436

A solemn region. Oft amid those haunts,  
From earnest dialogues I slipped in  
thought,

And let remembrance steal to other times,  
When o'er those interwoven roots, moss-  
clad, 440

And smooth as marble or a waveless sea,  
Some Hermit, from his cell forth-strayed,  
might pace

In sylvan meditation undisturbed;  
As on the pavement of a Gothic church  
Walks a lone Monk, when service hath  
expired, 445

In peace and silence. But if e'er was  
heard,—

Heard, though unseen,—a devious tra-  
veller,

Retiring or approaching from afar  
With speed and echoes loud of trampling  
hoofs

From the hard floor reverberated, then 450  
It was Angelica thundering through the  
woods

Upon her palfrey, or that gentle maid  
Erminia, fugitive as fair as she.

Sometimes methought I saw a pair of  
knights

Joust underneath the trees, that as in storm  
Rocked high above their heads; anon,  
the din 456

Of boisterous merriment, and music's roar,  
In sudden proclamation, burst from haunt  
Of Satyrs in some viewless glade, with  
dance

Rejoicing o'er a female in the midst, 460  
A mortal beauty, their unhappy thrall.

<sup>1</sup> For the story of W's relations with Beaupuy, see *Le Général Michel Beaupuy*, by MM. Georges Bussière and Emile Legouis: Chap. II.—Ed.

The width of those huge forests, unto me  
A novel scene, did often in this way  
Master my fancy while I wandered on  
With that revered companion. And some-  
times— 465

When to a convent in a meadow green,  
By a brook-side, we came, a roofless pile,  
And not by reverential touch of Time  
Dismantled, but by violence abrupt—  
In spite of those heart-bracing colloquies,  
In spite of real fervour, and of that 471  
Less genuine and wrought up within  
myself—

I could not but bewail a wrong so harsh,  
And for the ~~the~~ Matin-bell to sound no more  
Grieved, and the twilight taper, and the  
cross 475

High on the topmost pinnacle, a sign  
(How welcome to the weary traveller's  
eyes!)

Of hospitality and peaceful rest.  
And when the partner of those varied walks  
Pointed upon occasion to the site 480

Of Romorentin, home of ancient kings,  
To the imperial edifice of Blois,  
Or to that rural castle, name now slipped  
From my remembrance, where a lady  
lodged,

By the first Francis wooed, and bound to  
him 485

In chains of mutual passion, from the  
tower,

As a tradition of the country tells,  
Practised to commune with her royal  
knight

By cressets and love-beacons, intercourse  
'Twixt her high-seated residence and his  
Far off at Chambord on the plain beneath;  
Even here, though less than with the  
peaceful house

Religious, 'mid those frequent monuments  
Of Kings, their vices and their better  
deeds,

Imagination, potent to inflame 495  
At times with virtuous wrath and noble  
scorn,

Did also often mitigate the force  
Of civic prejudice, the bigotry,  
So call it, of a youthful patriot's mind;  
And on these spots with many gleams

I looked 500

Of chivalrous delight. Yet not the less,  
 Hatred of absolute rule, where will of one  
 Is law for all, and of that barren pride  
 In them who, by immunities unjust,  
 Between the sovereign and the people  
 stand, 505

His helper and not theirs, laid stronger  
 hold

Daily upon me, mixed with pity too  
 And love; for where hope is, there love  
 will be

For the abject multitude. And when we  
 chanced

One day to meet a hunger-bitten girl, 510  
 Who crept along fitting her languid gait  
 Unto a heifer's motion, by a cord  
 Tied to her arm, and picking thus from  
 the lane

Its sustenance, while the girl with pallid  
 hands 514

Was busy knitting in a heartless mood  
 Of solitude, and at the sight my friend  
 In agitation said, "'Tis against *that*  
 That we are fighting," I with him be-  
 lieved

That a benignant spirit was abroad  
 Which might not be withstood, that  
 poverty 520

Abject as this would in a little time  
 Be found no more, that we should see the  
 earth

Unthwarted in her wish to recompense  
 The meek, the lowly, patient child of toil,  
 All institutes for ever blotted out 525  
 That legalised exclusion, empty pomp  
 Abolished, sensual state and cruel power,  
 Whether by edict of the one or few;  
 And finally, as sum and crown of all,  
 Should see the people having a strong  
 hand 530

In framing their own laws; whence better  
 days

To all mankind. But, these things set  
 apart,

Was not this single confidence enough  
 To animate the mind that ever turned  
 A thought to human welfare,—that,  
 henceforth 535

Captivity by mandate without law  
 Should cease; and open accusation lead  
 To sentence in the hearing of the world,

And open punishment, if not the air  
 Be free to breathe in, and the heart of  
 man 540  
 Dread nothing? From this height I shall  
 not stoop

To humbler matter that detained us oft  
 In thought or conversation, public acts,  
 And public persons, and emotions wrought  
 Within the breast, as ever-varying winds  
 Of record or report swept over us; 546  
 But I might here, instead, repeat a tale<sup>1</sup>,  
 Told by my Patriot friend, of sad events,  
 That prove to what low depth had struck  
 the roots,

How widely spread the boughs, of that  
 old tree 550  
 Which, as a deadly mischief, and a foul  
 And black dishonour, France was weary of.

O, happy time of youthful lovers, (thus  
 The story might begin,) oh, balmy time,  
 In which a love-knot on a lady's brow,  
 Is fairer than the fairest star in Heaven!  
 So might—and with that prelude *did*  
 begin 557

The record; and, in faithful verse, was  
 given

The doleful sequel

But our little bark  
 On a strong river boldly hath been  
 launched; 560  
 And from the driving current should we  
 turn

To loiter wilfully within a creek,  
 Howe'er attractive, Fellow voyager!  
 Wouldst thou not chide? Yet deem not  
 my pains lost:

For Vaudracour and Julia (so were  
 named 565

The ill-fated pair) in that plain tale will  
 draw

Tears from the hearts of others, when  
 their own

Shall beat no more. Thou, also, there  
 may'st read,

At leisure, how the enamoured youth was  
 driven, 569

By public power abased, to fatal crime,  
 Nature's rebellion against monstrous law;

<sup>1</sup> *Vaudracour and Julia*, p. 121.—Ed.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| How, between heart and heart, oppres-<br>sion thrust   | He fled, to shun the haunts of human<br>kind;                          |
| Her mandates, severing whom true love<br>had joined,   | There dwelt, weakened in spirit more<br>and more;                      |
| Harassing both; until he sank and<br>pressed   | Nor could the <sup>580</sup> voice of Freedom, which<br>through France |
| The couch his fate had made for him;<br>supine, <sup>575</sup>                                   | Full speedily resounded, public hope.                                  |
| Save when the stings of viperous remorse,<br>Trying their strength, enforced him to<br>start up, | Or personal memory of his own worst<br>wrongs,                         |
| Aghast and prayerless. Into a deep wood  | Rouse him; but, hidden in those gloomy<br>shades, <sup>584</sup>       |
|  | His days he wasted,—an imbecile mind.                                  |

## BOOK TENTH.

## RESIDENCE IN FRANCE.—(CONTINUED).

|  |   |
|--|---|
| It was a beautiful and silent day<br>That overspread the countenance of earth,<br>Then fading with unusual quietness,—<br>A day as beautiful as e'er was given<br>To soothe regret, though deepening what<br>it soothed, <sup>5</sup>                    | Wide as a province, but, the signal given,<br>Before the point of the life-threatening<br>spear<br>Narrowing itself by moments—they, rash<br>men,<br>Had seen the anticipated quarry turned<br>Into avengers, from whose wrath they<br>fled <sup>26</sup>   |
| When by the gliding Loire I paused, and<br>cast  | In terror. Disappointment and dismay<br>Remained for all whose fancies had run<br>wild  |
| Upon his rich domains, vineyard and<br>tilth,<br>Green meadow-ground, and many-coloured<br>woods,<br>Again, and yet again, a farewell look;<br>Then from the quiet of that scene passed<br>on, <sup>10</sup>   | With evil expectations; confidence <sup>29</sup><br>And perfect triumph for the better cause.   |
| Bound to the fierce Metropolis. From<br>his throne<br>The King had fallen, and that invading<br>host—  | The State, as if to stamp the final seal<br>On her security, and to the world<br>Show what she was, a high and fearless<br>soul,  |
| Presumptuous cloud, on whose black<br>front was written<br>The tender mercies of the dismal wind<br>That bore it—on the plains of Liberty <sup>15</sup><br>Had burst innocuous. Say in bolder<br>words,<br>They—who had come elate as eastern<br>hunters | Exulting in defiance, or heart-stung<br>By sharp resentment, or belike to taunt<br>With spiteful gratitude the baffled<br>League, <sup>36</sup>   |
| Banded beneath the Great Mogul, when<br>he<br>Erewhile went forth from Agra or Lahore,<br>Rajahs and Omrahs in his train, intent <sup>20</sup><br>To drive their prey enclosed within a ring   | That had stirred up her slackening facul-<br>ties<br>To a new transition, when the King was<br>crushed,<br>Spared not the empty throne, and in<br>proud haste<br>Assumed the body and venerable name<br>Of a Republic. Lamentable crimes, <sup>41</sup><br>'Tis true, had gone before this hour, dire<br>work |

Of massacre, in which the senseless sword  
Was prayed to as a judge; but these were  
past,  
Earth free from them for ever, as was  
thought,— 45  
Ephemeral monsters, to be seen but once!  
Things that could only show themselves  
and die.

Cheered with this hope, to Paris I  
returned,  
And ranged, with ardour heretofore un-  
felt,  
The spacious city, and in progress passed  
The prison where the unhappy Monarch  
lay, 51  
Associate with his children and his wife  
In bondage; and the palace, lately  
stormed

With roar of cannon by a furious host. 54  
I crossed the square (an empty area then!)  
Of the Carrousel, where so late had lain  
The dead, upon the dying heaped, and  
gazed

On this and other spots, as doth a man 58  
Upon a volume whose contents he knows  
Are memorable, but from him locked up,  
Being written in a tongue he cannot read,  
So that he questions the mute leaves with  
pain,

And half upbraids their silence. But  
that night

I felt most deeply in what world I was,  
What ground I trod on, and what air I  
breathed. 65

High was my room and lonely, near the  
roof

Of a large mansion or hotel, a lodge  
That would have pleased me in more  
quiet times;

Nor was it wholly without pleasure then.  
With unextinguished taper I kept  
watch, 70

Reading at intervals; the fear gone by  
Pressed on me almost like a fear to come.  
I thought of those September massacres,  
Divided from me by one little month,  
Saw them and touched: the rest was con-  
jured up 75

From tragic fictions or true history,  
Remembrances and dim admonishments.

The horse is taught his manage, and no  
star  
Of wildest course but treads back his own  
steps;  
For the spent hurricane the air pro-  
vides 80  
As fierce a successor; the tide retreats  
But to return out of its hiding-place  
In the great deep; all things have second  
birth;

The earthquake is not satisfied at once;  
And in this way I wrought upon my-  
self, 85  
Until I seemed to hear a voice that cried,  
To the whole city, "sleep no more." The  
trance

Fled with the voice to which it had given  
birth;  
But vainly comments of a calmer mind  
Promised soft peace and sweet forgetful-  
ness. 90

The place, all hushed and silent as it was,  
Appeared unfit for the repose of night,  
Defenceless as a wood where tigers roam.

With early morning towards the Palace-  
walk

Of Orleans eagerly I turned; as yet 95  
The streets were still; not so those long  
Arcades;

There, 'mid a peal of ill-matched sounds  
and cries,

That greeted me on entering, I could  
hear

Shrill voices from the hawkers in the  
throng,

Bawling, "Denunciation of the Crimes 100  
Of Maximilian Robespierre;" the hand,  
Prompt as the voice, held forth a printed  
speech,

The same that had been recently pro-  
nounced,

When Robespierre, not ignorant for what  
mark

Some words of indirect reproof had  
been 105

Intended, rose in hardihood, and dared  
The man who had an ill surmise of him  
To bring his charge in openness; whereat,  
When a dead pause ensued, and no one  
stirred,

In silence of all present, from his seat 110  
 Louvet walked single through the avenue,  
 And took his station in the Tribune, say-  
 ing,

"I, Robespierre, accuse thee!" Well is  
 known

The inglorious issue of that charge, and  
 how

He, who had launched the startling thun-  
 derbolt, 115

The one bold man, whose voice the attack  
 had sounded,

Was left without a follower to discharge  
 His perilous duty, and retire lamenting  
 That Heaven's best aid is wasted upon  
 men

Who to themselves are false.

But these are things 120  
 Of which I speak, only as they were storm  
 Or sunshine to my individual mind,  
 No further. Let me then relate that  
 now—

In some sort seeing with my proper eyes  
 That Liberty, and Life, and Death would  
 soon 125

To the remotest corners of the land  
 Lie in the arbitrement of those who ruled  
 The capital City; what was struggled for,  
 And by what combatants victory must be  
 won;

The indecision on their part whose aim  
 Seemed best, and the straightforward  
 path of those 131

Who in attack or in defence were strong  
 Through their impiety—my inmost soul  
 Was agitated; yea, I could almost  
 Have prayed that throughout earth upon  
 all men, 135

By patient exercise of reason made  
 Worthy of liberty, all spirits filled  
 With zeal expanding in Truth's holy light,  
 The gift of tongues might fall, and power  
 arrive

From the four quarters of the winds to  
 do 140

For France, what without help she could  
 not do,

A work of honour; think not that to this  
 I added, work of safety: from all doubt  
 Or trepidation for the end of things  
 Far was I, far as angels are from guilt. 145

Yet did I grieve, nor only grieved, but  
 thought

Of opposition and of remedies:  
 An insignificant stranger and obscure,  
 And one, moreover, little graced with  
 power

Of eloquence even in my native speech,  
 And all unfit for tumult or intrigue, 151  
 Yet would I at this time with willing  
 heart

Have undertaken for a cause so great  
 Service however dangerous. I revolved,  
 How much the destiny of Man had  
 still 155

Hung upon single persons; that there  
 was,

Transcendent to all local patrimony,  
 One nature, as there is one sun in heaven;  
 That objects, even as they are great,  
 thereby

Do come within the reach of humblest  
 eyes; 160

That Man is only weak through his mis-  
 trust

And want of hope where evidence divine  
 Proclaims to him that hope should be  
 most sure;

Nor did the inexperience of my youth  
 Preclude conviction, that a spirit strong  
 In hope, and trained to noble aspira-  
 tions, 166

A spirit thoroughly faithful to itself,  
 Is for Society's unreasoning herd  
 A domineering instinct, serves at once  
 For way and guide, a fluent receptacle 170  
 That gathers up each petty straggling rill  
 And vein of water, glad to be rolled on  
 In safe obedience; that a mind, whose  
 rest

Is where it ought to be, in self-restraint,  
 In circumspection and simplicity, 175  
 Falls rarely in entire discomfiture  
 Below its aim, or meets with, from with-  
 out,

A treachery that foils it or defeats;  
 And, lastly, if the means on human will,  
 Frail human will, dependent should be-  
 tray 180

Him who too boldly trusted them, I felt  
 That 'mid the loud distractions of the  
 world

A sovereign voice subsists within the soul,  
 Arbiter undisturbed of right and wrong.  
 Of life and death, in majesty severe 185  
 Enjoining, as may best promote the aims  
 Of truth and justice, either sacrifice,  
 From whatsoever region of our cares  
 Or our infirm affections Nature pleads,  
 Earnest and blind, against the stern  
 decree. 190

On the other side, I called to mind  
 those truths  
 That are the commonplaces of the  
 schools—

(A theme for boys, too hackneyed for  
 their sires,)

Yet, with a revelation's liveliness,  
 In all their comprehensive bearings known  
 And visible to philosophers of old, 196  
 Men who, to business of the world un-  
 trained,

Lived in the shade; and to Harmodius  
 known

And his compeer Aristogiton, known  
 To Brutus—that tyrannic power is weak,  
 Hath neither gratitude, nor faith, nor  
 love, 201

Nor the support of good or evil men  
 To trust in; that the godhead which is  
 ours

Can never utterly be charmed or stilled;  
 That nothing hath a natural right to last  
 But equity and reason; that all else 206  
 Meets foes irreconcilable, and at best  
 Lives only by variety of disease.

Well might my wishes be intense, my  
 thoughts

Strong and perturbed, not doubting at  
 that time 210

But that the virtue of one paramount  
 mind

Would have abashed those impious  
 crests—have quelled

Outrage and bloody power, and—in de-  
 spite

Of what the People long had been and  
 were

Through ignorance and false teaching,  
 sadder proof 215

Of immaturity, and—in the teeth  
 Of desperate opposition from without—

Have cleared a passage for just govern-  
 ment,  
 And left a solid birthright to the State,  
 Redeemed, according to example given  
 By ancient lawgivers.

In this frame of mind,  
 Dragged by a chain of harsh necessity,  
 So seemed it,—now I thankfully acknow-  
 ledge,

Forced by the gracious providence of  
 Heaven,—

To England I returned, else (though  
 assured 225

That I both was and must be of small  
 weight,

No better than a landsman on the deck  
 Of a ship struggling with a hideous storm)  
 Doubtless, I should have then made  
 common cause

With some who perished; haply perished  
 too, 230

A poor mistaken and bewildered offer-  
 ing,—

Should to the breast of Nature have gone  
 back,

With all my resolutions, all my hopes,  
 A Poet only to myself, to men

Useless, and even, beloved Friend! a  
 soul 235

To thee unknown!

Twice had the trees let fall  
 Their leaves, as often Winter had put on  
 His hoary crown, since I had seen the  
 surge

Beat against Albion's shore, since ear of  
 mine

Had caught the accents of my native  
 speech 240

Upon our native country's sacred ground.  
 A patriot of the world, how could I glide  
 Into communion with her sylvan shades,  
 Erewhile my tuneful haunt? It pleased  
 me more

To abide in the great City, where I  
 found 245

The general air still busy with the stir  
 Of that first memorable onset made  
 By a strong levy of humanity  
 Upon the traffickers in Negro blood;  
 Effort which, though defeated, had re-  
 called 250

To notice old forgotten principles,  
 And through the nation spread a novel  
   heat  
 Of virtuous feeling. For myself, I own  
 That this particular strife had wanted  
   power  
 To rivet my affections; nor did now 255  
 Its unsuccessful issue much excite  
 My sorrow; for I brought with me the  
   faith  
 That, if France prospered, good men  
   would not long  
 Pay fruitless worship to humanity,  
 And this most rotten branch of human  
   shame, 260  
 Object, so seemed it, of superfluous pains,  
 Would fall together with its parent tree.  
 What, then, were my emotions, when in  
   arms  
 Britain put forth her freeborn strength  
   in league,  
 Oh, pity and shame! with those confede-  
   rate Powers! 265  
 Not in my single self alone I found,  
 But in the minds of all ingenuous youth,  
 Change and subversion from that hour.  
   No shock  
 Given to my moral nature had I known  
 Down to that very moment; neither lapse  
 Nor turn of sentiment that might be  
   named 271  
 A revolution, save at this one time;  
 All else was progress on the self-same  
   path  
 On which, with a diversity of pace,  
 I had been travelling: this a stride at  
   once 275  
 Into another region. As a light  
 And pliant harebell, swinging in the  
   breeze  
 On some grey rock—its birthplace—so  
   had I  
 Wantoned, fast rooted on the ancient  
   tower  
 Of my beloved country, wishing not 280  
 A happier fortune than to wither there:  
 Now was I from that pleasant station torn  
 And tossed about in whirlwind. I re-  
   joiced,  
 Yea, afterwards—truth most painful to  
   record!—

Exulted, in the triumph of my soul, 285  
 When Englishmen by thousands were  
   o'erthrown,  
 Left without glory on the field, or driven,  
 Brave hearts! to shameful flight. It was  
   a grief,—  
 Grief call it not, 'twas anything but  
   that,— 289  
 A conflict of sensations without name,  
 Of which *he* only, who may love the sight  
 Of a village steeple, as I do, can judge,  
 When, in the congregation bending all  
 To their great Father, prayers were offer-  
   ed up,  
 Or praises for our country's victories;  
 And, 'mid the simple worshippers, per-  
   chance 296  
 I only, like an uninvited guest  
 Whom no one owned, sate silent, shall  
   I add,  
 Fed on the day of vengeance yet to come.  
  
 Oh! much have they to account for, who  
   could tear, 300  
 By violence, at one decisive rent,  
 From the best youth in England their  
   dear pride,  
 Their joy, in England; this, too, at a  
   time  
 In which worst losses easily might wear  
 The best of names, when patriotic love  
 Did of itself in modesty give way, 306  
 Like the Precursor when the Deity  
 Is come Whose harbinger he was; a time  
 In which apostasy from ancient faith  
 Seemed but conversion to a higher creed;  
 Withal a season dangerous and wild, 311  
 A time when sage Experience would have  
   snatched  
 Flowers out of any hedge-row to compose  
 A chaplet in contempt of his grey locks.  
  
 When the proud fleet that bears the  
   red-cross flag 315  
 In that unworthy service was prepared  
 To mingle, I beheld the vessels lie,  
 A brood of gallant creatures, on the deep;  
 I saw them in their rest, a sojourner  
 Through a whole month of calm and glassy  
   days 320  
 In that delightful island which protects

Their place of convocation—there I heard,  
Each evening, pacing by the still sea-shore,

A monitory sound that never failed,—  
The sunset cannon. While the orb went down 325

In the tranquillity of nature, came  
That voice, ill requiem! seldom heard by me

Without a spirit overcast by dark  
Imaginations, sense of woes to come,  
Sorrow for human kind, and pain of heart. 330

In France, the men, who, for their  
desperate ends,

Had plucked up mercy by the roots, were  
glad

Of this new enemy. Tyrants, strong  
before

In wicked pleas, were strong as demons  
now;

And thus, on every side beset with foes,  
The goaded land waxed mad; the crimes  
of few 336

Spread into madness of the many; blasts  
From hell came sanctified like airs from  
heaven.

The sternness of the just, the faith of  
those

Who doubted not that Providence had  
times 340

Of vengeful retribution, theirs who  
throned

The human Understanding paramount  
And made of that their God, the hopes  
of men

Who were content to barter short-lived  
pangs

For a paradise of ages, the blind rage 345

Of insolent tempers, the light vanity  
Of intermeddlers, steady purposes

Of the suspicious, slips of the indiscreet,  
And all the accidents of life were pressed  
Into one service, busy with one work. 350

The Senate stood aghast, her prudence  
quenched,

Her wisdom stifled, and her justice scared,  
Her frenzy only active to extol

Past outrages, and shape the way for new,  
Which no one dared to oppose or mitigate,

Domestic carnage now filled the whole  
year 356

With feast-days; old men from the  
chimney-nook,

The maiden from the bosom of her love,  
The mother from the cradle of her babe,

The warrior from the field—all perished,  
all— 360

Friends, enemies, of all parties, ages,  
ranks,

Head after head, and never heads enough  
For those that bade them fall. They  
found their joy,

They made it proudly, eager as a child,  
(If like desires of innocent little ones 365

May with such heinous appetites be compared),

Pleased in some open field to exercise  
A toy that mimics with revolving wings

The motion of a wind-mill; though the air  
Do of itself blow fresh, and make the  
vanes 370

Spin in his eyesight, *that* contents him  
not,

But, with the plaything at arm's length,  
he sets

His front against the blast, and runs  
amain,

That it may whirl the faster.

Amid the depth  
Of those enormities, even thinking minds

Forgot, at seasons, whence they had their  
being; 376

Forgot that such a sound was ever heard  
As Liberty upon earth: yet all beneath

Her innocent authority was wrought,  
Nor could have been, without her blessed  
name. 380

The illustrious wife of Roland, in the  
hour

Of her composure, felt that agony,  
And gave it vent in her last words. O  
Friend!

It was a lamentable time for man,  
Whether a hope had e'er been his or not;

A woeful time for them whose hopes  
survived 386

The shock; most woeful for those few  
who still

Were flattered, and had trust in human  
kind:

They had the deepest feeling of the grief.  
Meanwhile the Invaders fared as they  
deserved : 390

The Herculean Commonwealth had put  
forth her arms,

And throttled, with an infant godhead's  
might

The snakes about her cradle; that was  
well,

And as it should be; yet no cure for them  
Whose souls were sick with pain of what  
would be 395

Hereafter brought in charge against man-  
kind.

Most melancholy at that time, O Friend!  
Were my day-thoughts,—my nights were  
miserable;

Through months, through years, long after  
the last beat

Of those atrocities, the hour of sleep 400  
To me came rarely charged with natural  
gifts,

Such ghastly visions had I of despair  
And tyranny, and implements of death;  
And innocent victims sinking under fear,  
And momentary hope, and worn-out  
prayer, 405

Each in his separate cell, or penned in  
crowds

For sacrifice, and struggling with fond  
mirth

And levity in dungeons, where the dust  
Was laid with tears. Then suddenly the  
scene

Changed, and the unbroken dream en-  
tangled me 410

In long orations, which I strove to plead  
Before unjust tribunals,—with a voice  
Labouring, a brain confounded, and a sense,  
Death-like, of treacherous desertion, felt  
In the last place of refuge—my own soul.

When I began in youth's delightful  
prime 416

To yield myself to Nature, when that  
strong

And holy passion overcame me first,  
Nor day nor night, evening or morn, was  
free

From its oppression. But, O Power  
Supreme! 420

Without Whose call this world would  
cease to breathe,

Who from the Fountain of Thy grace dost  
fill

The veins that branch through every  
frame of life,

Making man what he is, creature divine,  
In single or in social eminence, 425

Above the rest raised infinite ascents  
When reason that enables him to be

Is not sequestered—what a change is  
here!

How different ritual for this after-worship,  
What countenance to promote this second  
love! 430

The first was service paid to things which  
lie

Guarded within the bosom of Thy will.  
Therefore to serve was high beatitude;

Tumult was therefore gladness, and the  
fear

Ennobling, venerable; sleep secure, 435  
And waking thoughts more rich than  
happiest dreams.

But as the ancient Prophets, borne  
aloft

In vision, yet constrained by natural laws  
With them to take a troubled human  
heart,

Wanted not consolations, nor a creed 440  
Of reconciliation, then when they de-  
nounced,

On towns and cities, wallowing in the  
abyss

Of their offences, punishment to come;  
Or saw, like other men, with bodily eyes,

Before them, in some desolated place, 445  
The wrath consummate and the threat  
fulfilled;

So, with devout humility be it said,  
So, did a portion of that spirit fall

On me uplifted from the vantage-ground  
Of pity and sorrow to a state of being

That through the time's exceeding fierce-  
ness saw 451

Glimpses of retribution, terrible,  
And in the order of sublime behests:

But, even if that were not, amid the awe  
Of unintelligible chastisement, 455

Not only acquiescences of faith

Survived, but daring sympathies with  
 power,  
 Motions not treacherous or profane, else  
 why  
 Within the folds of no ungente breast  
 Their dread vibration to this hour pro-  
 longed? 460  
 Wild blasts of music thus could find their  
 way  
 Into the midst of turbulent events;  
 So that worst tempests might be listened  
 to.  
 Then was the truth received into my  
 heart,  
 That, under heaviest sorrow earth can  
 bring, 465  
 If from the affliction somewhere do not  
 grow  
 Honour which could not else have been,  
 a faith,  
 An elevation, and a sanctity,  
 If new strength be not given nor old  
 restored,  
 The blame is ours, not Nature's. When  
 a taunt 470  
 Was taken up by scoffers in their pride,  
 Saying, "Behold the harvest that we reap  
 From popular government and equality,"  
 I clearly saw that neither these nor aught  
 Of wild belief engrafted on their names  
 By false philosophy had caused the woe,  
 But a terrific reservoir of guilt  
 And ignorance filled up from age to age,  
 That could no longer hold its loathsome  
 charge,  
 But burst and spread in deluge through  
 the land. 480  
  
 And as the desert hath green spots, the  
 sea  
 Small islands scattered amid stormy  
 waves,  
 So that disastrous period did not want  
 Bright sprinklings of all human excellence,  
 To which the silver wands of saints in  
 Heaven 485  
 Might point with rapturous joy. Yet not  
 the less,  
 For those examples, in no age surpassed,  
 Of fortitude and energy and love,  
 And human nature faithful to herself

Under worst trials, was I driven to think  
 Of the glad times when first I traversed  
 France 491  
 A youthful pilgrim; above all reviewed  
 That eventide, when under windows bright  
 With happy faces and with garlands hung,  
 And through a rainbow-arch that spanned  
 the street, 495  
 Triumphal pomp for liberty confirmed,  
 I paced, a dear companion at my side,  
 The town of Arras, whence with promise  
 high  
 Issued, on delegation to sustain  
 Humanity and right, that Robespierre, 500  
 He who thereafter, and in how short time!  
 Wielded the sceptre of the Atheist crew.  
 When the calamity spread far and wide—  
 And this same city, that did then appear  
 To outrun the rest in exultation, groaned  
 Under the vengeance of her cruel son, 506  
 As Lear reproached the winds—I could  
 almost  
 Have quarrelled with that blameless  
 spectacle  
 For lingering yet an image in my mind  
 To mock me under such a strange re-  
 verse. 510  
  
 O Friend! few happier moments have  
 been mine  
 Than that which told the downfall of this  
 Tribe  
 So dreaded, so abhorred. The day de-  
 serves  
 A separate record. Over the smooth sands  
 Of Leven's ample estuary lay 515  
 My journey, and beneath a genial sun,  
 With distant prospect among gleams of  
 sky  
 And clouds, and intermingling mountain-  
 tops,  
 In one inseparable glory clad,  
 Creatures of one ethereal substance met  
 In consistory, like a diadem 521  
 Or crown of burning seraphs as they sit  
 In the empyrean. Underneath that pomp  
 Celestial, lay unseen the pastoral vales  
 Among whose happy fields I had grown  
 up 525  
 From childhood. On the fulgent spec-  
 tacle,

That neither passed away nor changed,  
 I gazed  
 Enrapt; but brightest things are wont to  
 draw  
 Sad opposites out of the inner heart,  
 As even their pensive influence drew from  
 mine. 530  
 How could it otherwise? for not in vain  
 That very morning had I turned aside  
 To seek the ground where, 'mid a throng  
 of graves,  
 An honoured teacher of my youth was  
 laid,  
 And on the stone were graven by his  
 desire 535  
 Lines from the churchyard elegy of Gray.  
 This faithful guide, speaking from his  
 death-bed,  
 Added no farewell to his parting counsel,  
 But said to me, "My head will soon lie  
 low;"  
 And when I saw the turf that covered  
 him, 540  
 After the lapse of full eight years, those  
 words,  
 With sound of voice and countenance of  
 the Man,  
 Came back upon me, so that some few  
 tears  
 Fell from me in my own despite. But  
 now  
 I thought, still traversing that widespread  
 plain, 545  
 With tender pleasure of the verses graven  
 Upon his tombstone, whispering to my-  
 self:  
 He loved the Poets, and, if now alive,  
 Would have loved me, as one not desti-  
 tute  
 Of promise, nor belying the kind hope  
 That he had formed, when I, at his com-  
 mand, 551  
 Began to spin, with toil, my earliest  
 songs.

As I advanced, all that I saw or felt  
 Was gentleness and peace. Upon a small  
 And rocky island near, a fragment stood  
 (Itself like a sea rock) the low remains 556  
 (With shells encrusted, dark with briny  
 weeds)

Of a dilapidated structure, once  
 A Romish chapel, where the vested priest  
 Said matins at the hour that suited those  
 Who crossed the sands with ebb of  
 morning-tide. 561  
 Not far from that still ruin all the  
 plain  
 Lay spotted with a variegated crowd  
 Of vehicles and travellers, horse and foot,  
 Wading beneath the conduct of their  
 guide 565  
 In loose procession through the shallow  
 stream  
 Of inland waters; the great sea mean-  
 while'  
 Heaved at safe distance, far retired. I  
 paused,  
 Longing for skill to paint a scene so  
 bright  
 And cheerful, but the foremost of the  
 band 570  
 As he approached, no salutation given  
 In the familiar language of the day,  
 Cried, "Robespierre is dead!"—nor was  
 a doubt,  
 After strict question, left within my  
 mind  
 That he and his supporters all were  
 fallen. 575

Great was my transport, deep my  
 gratitude  
 To everlasting Justice, by this fiat  
 Made manifest. "Come now, ye golden  
 times,"  
 Said I forth-pouring on those open sands  
 A hymn of triumph: "as the morning  
 comes 580  
 From out the bosom of the night, come  
 ye:  
 Thus far our trust is verified; behold!  
 They who with clumsy desperation  
 brought  
 A river of Blood, and preached that  
 nothing else  
 Could cleanse the Augean stable, by the  
 might 585  
 Of their own helper have been swept  
 away;  
 Their madness stands declared and  
 visible;

Elsewhere will safety now be sought, and  
 earth  
 March firmly towards righteousness and  
 peace."—  
 Then schemes I framed more calmly,  
 when and how 590  
 The madding factions might be tran-  
 quillised,  
 And how through hardships manifold and  
 long  
 The glorious renovation would proceed.  
 Thus interrupted by uneasy bursts  
 Of exultation, I pursued my way 595

Along that very shore which I had  
 skimmed  
 In former days, when—spurring from the  
 Vale  
 Of Nightshade, and St. Mary's mouldering  
 fane,  
 And the stone abbot, after circuit made  
 In wantonness of heart, a joyous band  
 Of schoolboys hastening to their distant  
 home 601  
 Along the margin of the moonlight sea—  
 We beat with thundering hoofs the level  
 sand.

## BOOK ELEVENTH.

### FRANCE.—(CONCLUDED).

FROM that time forth, Authority in  
 France  
 Put on a milder face; Terror had ceased,  
 Yet everything was wanting that might  
 give  
 Courage to them who looked for good by  
 light  
 Of rational Experience, for the shoots 5  
 And hopeful blossoms of a second spring:  
 Yet, in me, confidence was unimpaired;  
 The Senate's language, and the public acts  
 And measures of the Government, though  
 both  
 Weak, and of heartless omen, had not  
 power 10  
 To daunt me; in the People was my  
 trust,  
 And in the virtues which mine eyes had  
 seen.  
 I knew that wound external could not  
 take  
 Life from the young Republic; that new  
 foes  
 Would only follow, in the path of shame,  
 Their brethren, and her triumphs be in  
 the end 16  
 Great, universal, irresistible.  
 This intuition led me to confound  
 One victory with another, higher far,—  
 Triumphs of unambitious peace at home,

And noiseless fortitude. Beholding still  
 Resistance strong as heretofore, I thought  
 That what was in degree the same was  
 likewise  
 The same in quality,—that, as the worse  
 Of the two spirits then at strife remained  
 Untired, the better, surely, would pre-  
 serve 26  
 The heart that first had roused him.  
 Youth maintains,  
 In all conditions of society,  
 Communion more direct and intimate  
 With Nature,—hence, oftentimes, with  
 reason too— 30  
 Than age or manhood, even. To Nature,  
 then,  
 Power had reverted: habit, custom, law,  
 Had left an interregnum's open space  
 For *her* to move about in, uncontrolled.  
 Hence could I see how Babel-like their  
 task, 35  
 Who, by the recent deluge stupefied,  
 With their whole souls went culling from  
 the day  
 Its petty promises, to build a tower  
 For their own safety; laughed with my  
 compeers  
 At gravest heads, by enmity to France  
 Distempered, till they found, in every  
 blast 41

Forced from the street-disturbing news-  
 man's horn,  
 For her great cause record or prophecy  
 Of utter ruin. How might we believe  
 That wisdom could, in any shape, come  
 near 45  
 Men clinging to delusions so insane?  
 And thus, experience proving that no few  
 Of our opinions had been just, we took  
 Like credit to ourselves where less was due,  
 And thought that other notions were as  
 sound, 50  
 Yea, could not but be right, because we  
 saw  
 That foolish men opposed them.  
 To a strain  
 More animated I might here give way,  
 And tell, since juvenile errors are my theme,  
 What in those days through Britain was  
 performed 55  
 To turn *all* judgments out of their right  
 course;  
 But this is passion over-near ourselves,  
 Reality too close and too intense,  
 And intermixed with something, in my  
 mind,  
 Of scorn and condemnation personal, 60  
 That would profane the sanctity of verse.  
 Our Shepherds, this say merely, at that  
 time  
 Acted, or seemed at least to act, like men  
 Thirsting to make the guardian crook of  
 law  
 A tool of murder; they who ruled the  
 State,— 65  
 Though with such awful proof before  
 their eyes  
 That he, who would sow death, reaps  
 death, or worse,  
 And can reap nothing better,—child-like  
 longed  
 To imitate, not wise enough to avoid;  
 Or left (by mere timidity betrayed) 70  
 The plain straight road, for one no better  
 chosen  
 Than if their wish had been to undermine  
 Justice, and make an end of Liberty.  
 But from these bitter truths I must  
 return  
 To my own history. It hath been told

That I was led to take an eager part 76  
 In arguments of civil polity,  
 Abruptly, and indeed before my time;  
 I had approached, like other youths, the  
 shield,  
 Of human nature from the golden side,  
 And would have fought, even to the  
 death, to attest 81  
 The quality of the metal which I saw.  
 What there is best in individual man,  
 Of wise in passion, and sublime in power,  
 Benevolent in small societies, 85  
 And great in large ones, I had oft re-  
 volved,  
 Felt deeply, but not thoroughly under-  
 stood  
 By reason: nay, far from it; they were yet,  
 As cause was given me afterwards to learn,  
 Not proof against the injuries of the  
 day; 90  
 Lodged only at the sanctuary's door,  
 Not safe within its bosom. Thus pre-  
 pared,  
 And with such general insight into evil,  
 And of the bounds which sever it from  
 good,  
 As books and common intercourse with  
 life 95  
 Must needs have given—to the inex-  
 perient mind,  
 When the world travels in a beaten road,  
 Guide faithful as is needed—I began  
 To meditate with ardour on the rule  
 And management of nations; what it is  
 And ought to be; and strove to learn  
 how far 101  
 Their power or weakness, wealth or  
 poverty,  
 Their happiness or misery, depends  
 Upon their laws, and fashion of the State.  
 O pleasant exercise of hope and joy!<sup>1</sup>  
 For mighty were the auxiliars which then  
 stood 106  
 Upon our side, us who were strong in  
 love!  
 Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,  
 But to be young was very Heaven! O  
 times,

<sup>1</sup> See page 203.—Ed.

In which the meagre, stale, forbidding  
ways 110

Of custom, law, and statute, took at once  
The attraction of a country in romance!  
When Reason seemed the most to assert  
her rights

When most intent on making of herself  
A prime enchantress—to assist the work,  
Which then was going forward in her  
name! 116

Not favoured spots alone, but the whole  
Earth,

The beauty wore of promise—that which  
sets

(As at some moments might not be un-  
felt

Among the bowers of Paradise itself) 120  
The budding rose above the rose full  
blown.

What temper at the prospect did not  
wake

To happiness unthought of? The inert  
Were roused, and lively natures rapt  
away!

They who had fed their childhood upon  
dreams, 125

The play-fellows of fancy, who had made  
All powers of swiftness, subtilty, and  
strength

Their ministers,—who in lordly wise had  
stirred

Among the grandest objects of the sense,  
And dealt with whatsoever they found  
there 130

As if they had within some lurking right  
To wield it;—they, too, who of gentle  
mood

Had watched all gentle motions, and to  
these

Had fitted their own thoughts, schemers  
more mild,

And in the region of their peaceful  
selves;— 135

Now was it that *both* found, the meek  
and lofty

Did both find, helpers to their hearts'  
desire,

And stuff at hand, plastic as they could  
wish,—

Were called upon to exercise their skill,  
Not in Utopia,—subterranean fields,—

Or some secreted island, Heaven knows  
where! 141

But in the very world, which is the world  
Of all of us,—the place where, in the end,  
We find our happiness, or not at all!

Why should I not confess that Earth  
was then 145

To me, what an inheritance, new-fallen,  
Seems, when the first time visited, to one  
Who thither comes to find in it his home?  
He walks about and looks upon the spot  
With cordial transport, moulds it and  
remoulds, 150

And is half pleased with things that are  
amiss,

'Twill be such joy to see them disappear.

An active partisan, I thus convoked  
From every object pleasant circumstance  
To suit my ends; I moved among man-  
kind 155

With genial feelings still predominant;  
When erring, erring on the better part,  
And in the kinder spirit; placable,  
Indulgent, as not uninformed that men  
See as they have been taught—Antiquity  
Gives rights to error; and aware, no less,  
That throwing off oppression must be  
work

As well of License as of Liberty;

And above all—for this was more than  
all— 164

Not caring if the wind did now and then  
Blow keen upon an eminence that gave  
Prospect so large into futurity;  
In brief, a child of Nature, as at first,  
Diffusing only those affections wider  
That from the cradle had grown up with  
me, 170

And losing, in no other way than light  
Is lost in light, the weak in the more  
strong.

In the main outline, such it might be  
said

Was my condition, till with open war  
Britain opposed the liberties of France.  
This threw me first out of the pale of  
love; 176

Soured and corrupted, upwards to the  
source,

My sentiments; was not, as hitherto,  
 A swallowing up of lesser things in great;  
 But change of them into their contraries;  
 And thus a way was opened for mistakes 181  
 And false conclusions, in degree as gross,  
 In kind more dangerous. What had been  
 a pride,  
 Was now a shame; my likings and my  
 loves  
 Ran in new channels, leaving old ones  
 dry; 185  
 And hence a blow that, in maturer age,  
 Would but have touched the judgment,  
 struck more deep  
 Into sensations near the heart: mean-  
 time,  
 As from the first, wild theories were  
 afloat,  
 To whose pretensions, sedulously urged,  
 I had but lent a careless ear, assured 191  
 That time was ready to set all things  
 right,  
 And that the multitude, so long op-  
 pressed,  
 Would be oppressed no more.

But when events  
 Brought less encouragement, and unto  
 these 195  
 The immediate proof of principles no  
 more  
 Could be entrusted, while the events  
 themselves,  
 Worn out in greatness, stripped of  
 novelty,  
 Less occupied the mind, and sentiments  
 Could through my understanding's natural  
 growth 200  
 No longer keep their ground, by faith  
 maintained  
 Of inward consciousness, and hope that  
 laid  
 Her hand upon her object—evidence  
 Safer, of universal application, such  
 As could not be impeached, was sought  
 elsewhere. 205

But now, become oppressors in their  
 turn,  
 Frenchmen had changed a war of self-  
 defence

For one of conquest, losing sight of all  
 Which they had struggled for: up mounted  
 now, 220  
 Openly in the eye of earth and heaven,  
 The scale of liberty. I read her doom,  
 With anger vexed, with disappointment  
 sore,  
 But not dismayed, nor taking to the  
 shame  
 Of a false prophet. While resentment  
 rose  
 Striving to hide, what nought could heal,  
 the wounds 215  
 Of mortified presumption, I adhered  
 More firmly to old tenets, and, to prove  
 Their temper, strained them more; and  
 thus, in heat  
 Of contest, did opinions every day  
 Grow into consequence, till round my  
 mind 220  
 They clung, as if they were its life, nay  
 more,  
 The very being of the immortal soul.

This was the time, when, all things  
 tending fast  
 To depravation, speculative schemes—  
 That promised to abstract the hopes of  
 Man 225  
 Out of his feelings, to be fixed thence-  
 forth  
 For ever in a purer element—  
 Found ready welcome. Tempting region  
 that  
 For Zeal to enter and refresh herself,  
 Where passions had the privilege to work,  
 And never hear the sound of their own  
 names. 231  
 But, speaking more in charity, the dream  
 Flattered the young, pleased with ex-  
 tremes, nor least  
 With that which makes our Reason's  
 naked self  
 The object of its fervour. What delight!  
 How glorious! in self-knowledge and self-  
 rule, 236  
 To look through all the frailties of the  
 world,  
 And, with a resolute mastery shaking off  
 Infirmities of nature, time, and place,  
 Build social upon personal Liberty, 240

Which, to the blind restraints of general laws

Superior, magisterially adopts  
One guide, the light of circumstances,  
flashed

Upon an independent intellect.  
Thus expectation rose again; thus hope,  
From her first ground expelled, grew  
proud once more. 246

Oft, as my thoughts were turned to human kind,

I scorned indifference; but, inflamed with thirst

Of a secure intelligence, and sick 249  
Of other longing, I pursued what seemed  
A more exalted nature; wished that Man  
Should start out of his earthy, worm-like  
state,

And spread abroad the wings of Liberty,  
Lord of himself, in undisturbed delight—  
A noble aspiration! yet I feel 255  
(Sustained by worthier as by wiser  
thoughts)

The aspiration, nor shall ever cease  
To feel it;—but return we to our course.

Enough, 'tis true—could such a plea  
excuse

Those aberrations—had the clamorous  
friends 260

Of ancient Institutions said and done  
To bring disgrace upon their very names;  
Disgrace, of which, custom and written  
law,

And sundry moral sentiments as props  
Or emanations of those institutes, 265

Too justly bore a part. A veil had been  
Uplifted; why deceive ourselves? in sooth,  
'Twas even so; and sorrow for the man  
Who either had not eyes wherewith to  
see,

Or, seeing, had forgotten! A strong shock  
Was given to old opinions; all men's  
minds 271

Had felt its power, and mine was both let  
loose,

Let loose and goaded. After what hath  
been

Already said of patriotic love,  
Suffice it here to add, that, somewhat  
stern 275

In temperament, withal a happy man,  
And therefore bold to look on painful  
things,

Free likewise of the world, and thence  
more bold,

I summoned my best skill, and toiled,  
intent

To anatomise the frame of social life;

Yea, the whole body of society 281

Searched to its heart. Share with me,  
Friend! the wish

That some dramatic tale, endowed with  
shapes

Livelier, and flinging out less guarded  
words

Than suit the work we fashion, might set  
forth 285

What then I learned, or think I learned,  
of truth,

And the errors into which I fell, betrayed  
By present objects, and by reasonings  
false

From their beginnings, inasmuch as drawn  
Out of a heart that had been turned aside  
From Nature's way by outward accidents,  
And which was thus confounded, more  
and more

Misguided, and misguiding. So I fared,  
Dragging all precepts, judgments, maxims,  
creeds, 294

Like culprits to the bar; calling the mind,  
Suspiciously, to establish in plain day  
Her titles and her honours; now believ-  
ing,

Now disbelieving; endlessly perplexed  
With impulse, motive, right and wrong,  
the ground

Of obligation, what the rule and whence  
The sanction; till, demanding formal  
proof, 301

And seeking it in everything, I lost  
All feeling of conviction, and, in fine,  
Sick, wearied out with contrarieties, 304  
Yielded up moral questions in despair.

This was the crisis of that strong disease,  
This the soul's last and lowest ebb; I  
drooped,

Deeming our blessed reason of least use  
Where wanted most: "The lordly at-  
tributes 309

Of will and choice," I bitterly exclaimed,  
 "What are they but a mockery of a Being  
 Who hath in no concerns of his a test  
 Of good and evil; knows not what to fear  
 Or hope for, what to covet or to shun;  
 And who, if those could be discerned,  
     would yet 315  
 Be little profited, would see, and ask  
 Where is the obligation to enforce?  
 And, to acknowledged law rebellious, still,  
 As selfish passion urged, would act amiss;  
 The dupe of folly, or the slave of crime."

Depressed, bewildered thus, I did not  
     walk 321  
 With scoffers, seeking light and gay re-  
     venge  
 From indiscriminate laughter, nor sate  
     down  
 In reconciliation with an utter waste  
 Of intellect; such sloth I could not brook,  
 (Too well I loved, in that my spring of  
     life, 326  
 Pains-taking thoughts, and truth, their  
     dear reward)  
 But turned to abstract science, and there  
     sought  
 Work for the reasoning faculty enthroned  
 Where the disturbances of space and  
     time— 330  
 Whether in matters various, properties  
 Inherent, or from human will and power  
 Derived—find no admission. Then it was—  
 Thanks to the bounteous Giver of all  
     good!—  
 That the beloved Sister in whose sight  
 'Those days were passed, now speaking in  
     a voice 336  
 Of sudden admonition—like a brook  
 That did but cross a lonely road, and  
     now  
 Is seen, heard, felt, and caught at every  
     turn,  
 Companion never lost through many a  
     league— 340  
 Maintained for me a saving intercourse  
 With my true self; for, though bedimmed  
 and changed  
 Much, as it seemed, I was no further  
     changed  
 Than as a clouded and a waning moon:

She whispered still that brightness would  
     return, 345  
 She, in the midst of all, preserved me still  
 A Poet, made me seek beneath that name,  
 And that alone, my office upon earth;  
 And, lastly, as hereafter will be shown,  
 If willing audience fail not, Nature's self,  
 By all varieties of human love 351  
 Assisted, led me back through opening  
     day  
 To those sweet counsels between head  
     and heart  
 Whence grew that genuine knowledge,  
     fraught with peace,  
 Which, through the later sinkings of this  
     cause, 355  
 Hath still upheld me, and upholds me now  
 In the catastrophe (for so they dream,  
 And nothing less), when, finally to close  
 And seal up all the gains of France, a  
     Pope  
 Is summoned in to crown an Emperor—  
 This last opprobrium, when we see a  
     people, 361  
 That once looked up in faith, as if to  
     Heaven  
 For manna, take a lesson from the dog  
 Returning to his vomit; when the sun  
 That rose in splendour, was alive, and  
     moved 365  
 In exultation with a living pomp  
 Of clouds—his glory's natural retinue—  
 Hath dropped all functions by the gods  
     bestowed,  
 And, turned into a gewgaw, a machine,  
 Sets like an Opera phantom.

Thus, O Friend!  
 Through times of honour and through  
     times of shame 371  
 Descending, have I faithfully retraced  
 The perturbations of a youthful mind  
 Under a long-lived storm of great events—  
 A story destined for thy ear, who now,  
 Among the fallen of nations, dost abide  
 Where Etna, over hill and valley, casts  
 His shadow stretching towards Syracuse,  
 The city of Timoleon! Righteous Heaven!  
 How are the mighty prostrated! They  
     first, 380  
 They first of all that breathe should have  
     awaked

When the great voice was heard from out  
the tombs

Of ancient heroes. If I suffered grief  
For ill-requited France, by many deemed  
A trifer only in her proudest day; 385  
Have been distressed to think of what  
she once

Promised, now is; a far more sober cause  
Thine eyes must see of sorrow in a land,  
To the reanimating influence lost  
Of memory, to virtue lost and hope, 390  
Though with the wreck of loftier years  
bestrewn.

But indignation works where hope is  
not,  
And thou, O Friend! wilt be refreshed.  
There is

One great society alone on earth:  
The noble Living and the noble Dead. 395

Thine be such converse strong and sa-  
native,  
A ladder for thy spirit to reascend  
To health and joy and pure contented-  
ness;

To me the grief confined, that thou art  
gone

From this last spot of earth, where Free-  
dom now 400

Stands single in her only sanctuary;  
A lonely wanderer art gone, by pain  
Compelled and sickness, at this latter day,  
This sorrowful reverse for all mankind.  
I feel for thee, must utter what I feel: 405  
The sympathies erewhile in part dis-  
charged,

Gather afresh, and will have vent again:  
My own delights do scarcely seem to me  
My own delights; the lordly Alps them-  
selves,

Those rosy peaks, from which the Morn-  
ing looks 410

Abroad on many nations, are no more  
For me that image of pure gladness  
Which they were wont to be. Through  
kindred scenes,

For purpose, at a time, how different!  
Thou tak'st thy way, carrying the heart  
and soul 415

That Nature gives to Poets, now by  
thought

Matured, and in the summer of their  
strength.

Oh! wrap him in your shades, ye giant  
woods,

On Etna's side; and thou, O flowery field  
Of Enna! is there not some nook of thine,  
From the first playtime of the infant  
world 421

Kept sacred to restorative delight,  
When from afar invoked by anxious love?

Child of the mountains, among shep-  
herds reared,

Ere yet familiar with the classic page, 425  
I learnt to dream of Sicily; and lo,  
The gloom, that, but a moment past, was  
deepened

At thy command, at her command gives  
way;

A pleasant promise, wafted from her  
shores,

Comes o'er my heart: in fancy I behold  
Her seas yet smiling, her once happy  
vales; 431

Nor can my tongue give utterance to a name  
Of note belonging to that honoured isle,  
Philosopher or Bard, Empedocles,

Or Archimedes, pure abstracted soul! 435  
That doth not yield a solace to my grief:  
And, O Theocritus<sup>1</sup>, so far have some  
Prevailed among the powers of heaven  
and earth,

By their endowments, good or great, that  
they

Have had, as thou reportest, miracles  
Wrought for them in old time: yea, not  
unmoved, 441

When thinking on my own beloved friend,  
I hear thee tell how bees with honey fed  
Divine Comates, by his impious lord

Within a chest imprisoned; how they  
came 445

Laden from blooming grove or flowery field,  
And fed him there, alive, month after  
month,

Because the goatherd, blessed man! had  
lips

Wet with the Muses' nectar.

Thus I soothe

<sup>1</sup> Theocrit. Idyll. vii. 78.—Ed.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| The pensive moments by this calm fire-<br>side, 450 | 'Mid temples, served by sapient priests,<br>and choirs 460                                     |
| And find a thousand bounteous images                | Of virgins crowned with roses. Not in<br>vain  |
| To cheer the thoughts of those I love, and<br>mine. | Those temples, where they in their ruins<br>yet  |
| Our prayers have been accepted; thou<br>wilt stand  | Survive for inspiration, shall attract   |
| On Etna's summit, above earth and sea,              | Thy solitary steps: and on the brink 464   |
| Triumphant, winning from the invaded<br>heavens 455 | Thou wilt recline of pastoral Arethuse;  |
| Thoughts without bound, magnificent de-<br>signs,   | Or, if that fountain be in truth no more,<br>Then, near some other spring—which by<br>the name |
| Worthy of poets who attuned their harps             | Thou gratulatest, willingly deceived—  |
| In wood or echoing cave, for discipline             | I see thee linger a glad votary, 469   |
| Of heroes; or, in reverence to the gods,            | And not a captive pining for his home.   |

## BOOK TWELFTH.

### IMAGINATION AND TASTE, HOW IMPAIRED AND RESTORED.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| LONG time have human ignorance and<br>guilt  | Bend the complying heads of lordly pines,<br>And, with a touch, shift the stupendous<br>clouds |
| Detained us, on what spectacles of woe   | Through the whole compass of the sky;<br>ye brooks,  |
| Compelled to look, and inwardly op-<br>pressed                                       | Muttering along the stones, a busy noise<br>By day, a quiet sound in silent night; 20          |
| With sorrow, disappointment, vexing<br>thoughts,                                     | Ye waves, that out of the great deep steal<br>forth  |
| Confusion of the judgment, zeal decayed,<br>And, lastly, utter loss of hope itself 6 | In a calm hour to kiss the pebbly shore,<br>Not mute, and then retire, fearing no<br>storm;    |
| And things to hope for! Not with these<br>began                                      | And you, ye groves, whose ministry it is<br>To interpose the covert of your shades, 25         |
| Our song, and not with these our song<br>must end.—                                  | Even as a sleep, between the heart of man<br>And outward troubles, between man him-<br>self,   |
| Ye motions of delight, that haunt the<br>sides                                       | Not seldom, and his own uneasy heart:<br>Oh! that I had a music and a voice                    |
| Of the green hills; ye breezes and soft<br>airs, 10                                  | Harmonious as your own, that I might<br>tell 30  |
| Whose subtle intercourse with breathing<br>flowers,                                  | What ye have done for me. The morning<br>shines,   |
| Feelingly watched, might teach Man's<br>haughty race                                 | Nor heedeth Man's perverseness; Spring<br>returns,—  |
| How without injury to take, to give<br>Without offence; ye who, as if to show        |  |
| The wondrous influence of power gently<br>used, 15                                   |  |

I saw the Spring return, and could rejoice,  
In common with the children of her love,  
Piping on boughs, or sporting on fresh  
fields, 35

Or boldly seeking pleasure nearer heaven  
On wings that navigate cerulean skies.

So neither were complacency, nor peace,  
Nor tender yearnings, wanting for my  
good

Through these distracted times; in Na-  
ture still 40

Glorying, I found a counterpoise in her,  
Which, when the spirit of evil reached  
its height,

Maintained for me a secret happiness.

This narrative, my Friend! hath chiefly  
told

Of intellectual power, fostering love, 45  
Dispensing truth, and, over men and  
things,

Where reason yet might hesitate, diffusing  
Prophetic sympathies of genial faith:

So was I favoured—such my happy lot—  
Until that natural graciousness of mind

Gave way to overpressure from the times  
And their disastrous issues. What availed,

When spells forbade the voyager to land,  
That fragrant notice of a pleasant shore

Wafted, at intervals, from many a bower  
Of blissful gratitude and fearless love? 56

Dare I avow that wish was mine to see,  
And hope that future times *would* surely

see,  
The man to come, parted, as by a gulph,

From him who had been; that I could no  
more 60

Trust the elevation which had made me  
one

With the great family that still survives  
To illuminate the abyss of ages past,

Sage, warrior, patriot, hero; for it seemed  
That their best virtues were not free from

taint 65  
Of something false and weak, that could  
not stand

The open eye of Reason. Then I said,  
“Go to the Poets, they will speak to thee

More perfectly of purer creatures;—yet  
If reason be nobility in man, 70

Can aught be more ignoble than the man

Whom they delight in, blinded as he is  
By prejudice, the miserable slave  
Of low ambition or distempered love?”

In such strange passion, if I may once  
more 75

Review the past, I warred against my-  
self—

A bigot to a new idolatry—

Like a cowed monk who hath forsworn  
the world,

Zealously laboured to cut off my heart  
From all the sources of her former

strength; 80  
And as, by simple waving of a wand,  
The wizard instantaneously dissolves

Palace or grove, even so could I unsoul  
As readily by syllogistic words

Those mysteries of being which have  
made, 85

And shall continue evermore to make,  
Of the whole human race one brother-  
hood.

What wonder, then, if, to a mind so far  
Perverted, even the visible Universe

Fell under the dominion of a taste 90  
Less spiritual, with microscopic view  
Was scanned, as I had scanned the moral

world?

O Soul of Nature! excellent and fair!  
That didst rejoice with me, with whom I,

too,  
Rejoiced through early youth, before the

winds 95  
And roaring waters, and in lights and  
shades

That marched and countermarched about  
the hills

In glorious apparition, Powers on whom  
I daily waited, now all eye and now 99

All ear; but never long without the heart  
Employed, and man's unfolding intellect:

O Soul of Nature! that, by laws divine  
Sustained and governed, still dost over-

flow  
With an impassioned life, what feeble

ones  
Walk on this earth! how feeble have I

been 105

When thou wert in thy strength! Nor  
 this through stroke  
 Of human suffering, such as justifies  
 Remissness and inaptitude of mind,  
 But through presumption; even in pleasure pleased 109

Unworthily, disliking here, and there  
 Liking; by rules of mimic art transferred  
 To things above all art; but more,—for  
 this,

Although a strong infection of the age,  
 Was never much my habit—giving way  
 To a comparison of scene with scene, 115  
 Bent overmuch on superficial things,  
 Pampering myself with meagre novelties  
 Of colour and proportion; to the moods  
 Of time and season, to the moral power,  
 The affections and the spirit of the place,  
 Insensible. Nor only did the love 121  
 Of sitting thus in judgment interrupt  
 My deeper feelings, but another cause,  
 More subtle and less easily explained,  
 That almost seems inherent in the creature, 125

A twofold frame of body and of mind.  
 I speak in recollection of a time  
 When the bodily eye, in every stage of life  
 The most despotic of our senses, gained  
 Such strength in *me* as often held my  
 mind 130

In absolute dominion. Gladly here,  
 Entering upon abstruser argument,  
 Could I endeavour to unfold the means  
 Which Nature studiously employs to  
 thwart

This tyranny, summons all the senses  
 each 135

To counteract the other, and themselves,  
 And makes them all, and the objects with  
 which all

Are conversant, subservient in their turn  
 To the great ends of Liberty and Power.  
 But leave we this: enough that my  
 delights 140

(Such as they were) were sought insatiably.

Vivid the transport, vivid though not  
 profound;

I roamed from hill to hill, from rock to  
 rock,

Still craving combinations of new forms,

New pleasure, wider empire for the sight,  
 Proud of her own endowments, and rejoiced 146

To lay the inner faculties asleep.  
 Amid the turns and counterturns, the  
 strife

And various trials of our complex being,  
 As we grow up, such thralldom of that  
 sense 150

Seems hard to shun. And yet I knew a  
 maid,

A young enthusiast, who escaped these  
 bonds;

Her eye was not the mistress of her  
 heart;

Far less did rules prescribed by passive  
 taste,

Or barren intermeddling subtleties, 155  
 Perplex her mind; but, wise as women  
 are

When genial circumstance hath favoured  
 them,

She welcomed what was given, and craved  
 no more;

Whate'er the scene presented to her view  
 That was the best, to that she was attuned  
 By her benign simplicity of life, 161  
 And through a perfect happiness of soul,  
 Whose variegated feelings were in this  
 Sisters, that they were each some new  
 delight.

Birds in the bower, and lambs in the  
 green field, 165

Could they have known her, would have  
 loved; methought

Her very presence such a sweetness  
 breathed,

That flowers, and trees, and even the  
 silent hills,

And everything she looked on, should  
 have had

An intimation how she bore herself 170  
 Towards them and to all creatures. God

delights  
 In such a being; for, her common  
 thoughts

Are piety, her life is gratitude.

Even like this maid, before I was called  
 forth 174

From the retirement of my native hills,

I loved whate'er I saw : nor lightly loved,  
But most intensely ; never dreamt of  
aught

More grand, more fair, more exquisitely  
framed

Than those few nooks to which my happy  
feet

Were limited. I had not at that time  
Lived long enough, nor in the least sur-  
vived 181

The first diviner influence of this world,  
As it appears to unaccustomed eyes.

Worshipping then among the depth of  
things,

As piety ordained ; could I submit 185  
To measured admiration, or to aught  
That should preclude humility and love ?

I felt, observed, and pondered ; did not  
judge,

Yea, never thought of judging ; with the  
gift

Of all this glory filled and satisfied. 190  
And afterwards, when through the gor-  
geous Alps

Roaming, I carried with me the same  
heart :

In truth, the degradation—howso'er  
Induced, effect, in whatso'er degree,

Of custom that prepares a partial scale  
In which the little oft outweighs the

great ; 196  
Or any other cause that hath been  
named ;

Or lastly, aggravated by the times  
And their impassioned sounds, which

well might make 199  
The milder minstrelsies of rural scenes  
Inaudible—was transient ; I had known

Too forcibly, too early in my life,  
Visitings of imaginative power

For this to last : I shook the habit off  
Entirely and for ever, and again 205

In Nature's presence stood, as now I  
stand,

A sensitive being, a *creative* soul.

There are in our existence spots of  
time,

That with distinct pre-eminence retain  
A renovating virtue, whence, depressed

By false opinion and contentious thought,

Or aught of heavier or more deadly  
weight,

In trivial occupations, and the round  
Of ordinary intercourse, our minds 214

Are nourished and invisibly repaired ;  
A virtue, by which pleasure is enhanced,

That penetrates, enables us to mount,  
When high, more high, and lifts us up

when fallen.  
This efficacious spirit chiefly lurks

Among those passages of life that give  
Profoundest knowledge to what point,

and how, 221  
The mind is lord and master—outward  
sense

The obedient servant of her will. Such  
moments

Are scattered everywhere, taking their  
date

From our first childhood. I remember  
well, 225

That once, while yet my inexperienced  
hand

Could scarcely hold a bridle, with proud  
hopes

I mounted, and we journeyed towards  
the hills :

An ancient servant of my father's house  
Was with me, my encourager and guide :

We had not travelled long, ere some  
mischance 231

Disjoined me from my comrade ; and,  
through fear

Dismounting, down the rough and stony  
moor

I led my horse, and, stumbling on, at  
length

Came to a bottom, where in former times  
A murderer had been hung in iron chains.

The gibbet-mast had mouldered down,  
the bones 237

And iron case were gone ; but on the  
turf,

Hard by, soon after that fell deed was  
wrought,

Some unknown hand had carved the  
murderer's name. 240

The monumental letters were inscribed  
In times long past ; but still, from year

to year,  
By superstition of the neighbourhood,

The grass is cleared away, and to this hour  
 The characters are fresh and visible: 245  
 A casual glance had shown them, and I fled,  
 Faltering and faint, and ignorant of the road:  
 Then, reascending the bare common, saw  
 A naked pool that lay beneath the hills,  
 The beacon on the summit, and, more near, 250  
 A girl, who bore a pitcher on her head,  
 And seemed with difficult steps to force her way  
 Against the blowing wind. It was, in truth,  
 An ordinary sight; but I should need  
 Colours and words that are unknown to man, 255  
 To paint the visionary dreariness  
 Which, while I looked all round for my lost guide,  
 Invested moorland waste, and naked pool,  
 The beacon crowning the lone eminence,  
 The female and her garments vexed and tossed 260  
 By the strong wind. When, in the blessed hours  
 Of early love, the loved one at my side,  
 I roamed, in daily presence of this scene,  
 Upon the naked pool and dreary crags,  
 And on the melancholy beacon, fell 265  
 A spirit of pleasure and youth's golden gleam;  
 And think ye not with radiance more sublime  
 For these remembrances, and for the power  
 They had left behind? So feeling comes in aid  
 Of feeling, and diversity of strength 270  
 Attends us, if but once we have been strong.  
 Oh! mystery of man, from what a depth  
 Proceed thy honours. I am lost, but see  
 In simple childhood something of the base  
 On which thy greatness stands; but this I feel, 275  
 That from thyself it comes, that thou must give,  
 Else never canst receive. The days gone by  
 Return upon me almost from the dawn  
 Of life: the hiding-places of man's power  
 Open; I would approach them, but they close. 280  
 I see by glimpses now; when age comes on,  
 May scarcely see at all; and I would give,  
 While yet we may, as far as words can give,  
 Substance and life to what I feel, enshrining,  
 Such is my hope, the spirit of the Past  
 For future restoration.—Yet another 286  
 Of these memorials:—  
 One Christmas-time,  
 On the glad eve of its dear holidays,  
 Feverish, and tired, and restless, I went forth  
 Into the fields, impatient for the sight  
 Of those led palfreys that should bear us home; 291  
 My brothers and myself. There rose a crag,  
 That, from the meeting-point of two highways  
 Ascending, overlooked them both, far stretched;  
 Thither, uncertain on which road to fix  
 My expectation, thither I repaired, 296  
 Scout-like, and gained the summit; 'twas a day  
 Tempestuous, dark, and wild, and on the grass  
 I sate half-sheltered by a naked wall;  
 Upon my right hand couched a single sheep, 300  
 Upon my left a blasted hawthorn stood;  
 With those companions at my side, I watched,  
 Straining my eyes intensely, as the mist  
 Gave intermitting prospect of the copse  
 And plain beneath. Ere we to school returned,— 305  
 That dreary time,—ere we had been ten days  
 Sojourners in my father's house, he died,  
 And I and my three brothers, orphans then,

Followed his body to the grave. The  
     event,  
 With all the sorrow that it brought,  
     appeared 310  
 A chastisement; and when I called to  
     mind  
 That day so lately past, when from the  
     crag  
 I looked in such anxiety of hope;  
 With trite reflections of morality, 314  
 Yet in the deepest passion, I bowed low  
 To God, Who thus corrected my desires;  
 And, afterwards, the wind and sleety rain,  
 And all the business of the elements,  
 The single sheep, and the one blasted tree,  
 And the bleak music from that old stone  
     wall, 320  
 The noise of wood and water, and the  
     mist  
 That on the line of each of those two roads

Advanced in such indisputable shapes;  
 All these were kindred spectacles and  
     sounds  
 To which I oft repaired, and thence  
     would drink, 325  
 As at a fountain; and on winter nights,  
 Down to this very time, when storm and  
     rain  
 Beat on my roof, or, haply, at noon-day,  
 While in a grove I walk, whose lofty  
     trees,  
 Laden with summer's thickest foliage,  
     rock 330  
 In a strong wind, some working of the  
     spirit,  
 Some inward agitations thence are brought,  
 Whate'er their office, whether to beguile  
 Thoughts over busy in the course they  
     took,  
 Or animate an hour of vacant ease. 335

## BOOK THIRTEENTH.

### IMAGINATION AND TASTE, HOW IMPAIRED AND RESTORED.—(CONCLUDED).

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>From Nature doth emotion come, and<br/>moods<br/>Of calmness equally are Nature's gift :<br/>This is her glory ; these two attributes<br/>Are sister horns that constitute her<br/>strength.<br/>Hence Genius, born to thrive by inter-<br/>change 5<br/>Of peace and excitation, finds in her<br/>His best and purest friend ; from her<br/>receives<br/>That energy by which he seeks the truth,<br/>From her that happy stillness of the<br/>mind<br/>Which fits him to receive it when un-<br/>sought. 10</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Such benefit the humblest intellects<br/>Partake of, each in their degree ; 'tis mine<br/>To speak, what I myself have known and<br/>felt ;<br/>Smooth task ! for words find easy way,<br/>inspired<br/>By gratitude, and confidence in truth. 15<br/>Long time in search of knowledge did I<br/>range<br/>The field of human life, in heart and<br/>mind<br/>Benighted ; but, the dawn beginning<br/>now<br/>To re-appear, 'twas proved that not in<br/>vain<br/>I had been taught to reverence a Power<br/>That is the visible quality and shape 21<br/>And image of right reason ; that matures<br/>Her processes by steadfast laws ; gives<br/>birth<br/>To no impatient or fallacious hopes,<br/>No heat of passion or excessive zeal, 25<br/>No vain conceits ; provokes to no quick<br/>turns</p> | <p>Of self-applauding intellect ; but trains<br/>To meekness, and exalts by humble faith ;<br/>Holds up before the mind intoxicate 29<br/>With present objects, and the busy dance<br/>Of things that pass away, a temperate show<br/>Of objects that endure ; and by this course<br/>Disposes her, when over-fondly set<br/>On throwing off incumbrances, to seek<br/>In man, and in the frame of social life, 35<br/>Whate'er there is desirable and good<br/>Of kindred permanence, unchanged in<br/>form<br/>And function, or, through strict vicissi-<br/>tude<br/>Of life and death, revolving. Above all<br/>Were re-established now those watchful<br/>thoughts 40<br/>Which, seeing little worthy or sublime<br/>In what the Historian's pen so much de-<br/>lights<br/>To blazon—power and energy detached<br/>From moral purpose—early tutored me<br/>To look with feelings of fraternal love 45<br/>Upon the unassuming things that hold<br/>A silent station in this beauteous world.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Thus moderated, thus composed, I found<br/>Once more in Man an object of delight,<br/>Of pure imagination, and of love ; 50<br/>And, as the horizon of my mind enlarged,<br/>Again I took the intellectual eye<br/>For my instructor, studious more to see<br/>Great truths, than touch and handle<br/>little ones.<br/>Knowledge was given accordingly ; my<br/>trust 55<br/>Became more firm in feelings that had<br/>stood<br/>The test of such a trial ; clearer far<br/>My sense of excellence—of right and<br/>wrong :<br/>The promise of the present time retired</p> |
|--|--|

Into its true proportion; sanguine schemes,  
Ambitious projects, pleased me less; I  
sought 61

For present good in life's familiar face,  
And built thereon my hopes of good to  
come.

With settling judgments now of what  
would last

And what would disappear; prepared to  
find 65

Presumption, folly, madness, in the men  
Who thrust themselves upon the passive  
world

As Rulers of the world; to see in these,  
Even when the public welfare is their aim,  
Plans without thought, or built on theo-  
ries 70

Vague and unsound; and having brought  
the books

Of modern statists to their proper test,  
Life, human life, with all its sacred claims  
Of sex and age, and heaven-descended  
rights,

Mortal, or those beyond the reach of  
death; 75

And having thus discerned how dire a  
thing

Is worshipped in that idol proudly named  
"The Wealth of Nations," where alone  
that wealth

Is lodged, and how increased; and having  
gained

A more judicious knowledge of the worth  
And dignity of individual man, 81

No composition of the brain, but man  
Of whom we read, the man whom we be-  
hold

With our own eyes—I could not but  
enquire—

Not with less interest than heretofore, 85  
But greater, though in spirit more sub-  
dued—

Why is this glorious creature to be found  
One only in ten thousand? What one is,  
Why may not millions be? What bars  
are thrown

By Nature in the way of such a hope? 90  
Our animal appetites and daily wants,  
Are these obstructions insurmountable?

If not, then others vanish into air.

"Inspect the basis of the social pile:

Enquire," said I, "how much of mental  
power 95

And genuine virtue they possess who live  
By bodily toil, labour exceeding far  
Their due proportion, under all the weight  
Of that injustice which upon ourselves  
Ourselves entail." Such estimate to frame  
I chiefly looked (what need to look  
beyond?) 101

Among the natural abodes of men,  
Fields with their rural works; recalled  
to mind

My earliest notices; with these compared  
The observations made in later youth,  
And to that day continued.—For, the  
time 106

Had never been when throes of mighty  
Nations

And the world's tumult unto me could  
yield,

How far soe'er transported and possessed,  
Full measure of content; but still I  
craved 110

An intermingling of distinct regards  
And truths of individual sympathy

Nearer ourselves. Such often might be  
gleaned

From the great City, else it must have  
proved

To me a heart-depressing wilderness; 115  
But much was wanting: therefore did I  
turn

To you, ye pathways, and ye lonely roads;  
Sought you enriched with everything I  
prized,

With human kindnesses and simple joys.

Oh! next to one dear state of bliss,  
vouchsafed 120

Alas! to few in this untoward world,  
The bliss of walking daily in life's prime  
Through field or forest with the maid we  
love,

While yet our hearts are young, while yet  
we breathe 124

Nothing but happiness, in some lone nook,  
Deep vale, or anywhere, the home of both,  
From which it would be misery to stir:

Oh! next to such enjoyment of our youth,  
In my esteem, next to such dear delight,

Was that of wandering on from day to day 130  
 Where I could meditate in peace, and cull  
 Knowledge that step by step might lead  
 me on  
 To wisdom ; or, as lightsome as a bird  
 Wafted upon the wind from distant lands,  
 Sing notes of greeting to strange fields or  
 groves, 135  
 Which lacked not voice to welcome me in  
 turn :  
 And, when that pleasant toil had ceased  
 to please,  
 Converse with men, where if we meet a  
 face  
 We almost meet a friend, on naked  
 heaths  
 With long long ways before, by cottage  
 bench, 140  
 Or well-spring where the weary traveller  
 rests.

Who doth not love to follow with his eye  
 The windings of a public way? the sight,  
 Familiar object as it is, hath wrought  
 On my imagination since the morn 145  
 Of childhood, when a disappearing line,  
 One daily present to my eyes, that crossed  
 The naked summit of a far-off hill  
 Beyond the limits that my feet had trod,  
 Was like an invitation into space 150  
 Boundless, or guide into eternity.  
 Yes, something of the grandeur which  
 invests  
 The mariner who sails the roaring sea  
 Through storm and darkness, early in my  
 mind  
 Surrounded, too, the wanderers of the  
 earth ; 155  
 Grandeur as much, and loveliness far  
 more.  
 Awed have I been by strolling Bedlam-  
 ites ;  
 From many other uncouth vagrants  
 (passed  
 In fear) have walked with quicker step ;  
 but why  
 Take note of this? When I began to  
 enquire, 160  
 To watch and question those I met, and  
 speak

Without reserve to them, the lonely roads  
 Were open schools in which I daily read  
 With most delight the passions of man-  
 kind,  
 Whether by words, looks, sighs, or tears,  
 revealed ; 165  
 There saw into the depth of human souls,  
 Souls that appear to have no depth at all  
 To careless eyes. And—now convinced  
 at heart  
 How little those formalities, to which  
 With overweening trust alone we give  
 The name of Education, have to do 171  
 With real feeling and just sense ; how vain  
 A correspondence with the talking world  
 Proves to the most ; and called to make  
 good search  
 If man's estate, by doom of Nature yoked  
 With toil, be therefore yoked with igno-  
 rance ; 176  
 If virtue be indeed so hard to rear,  
 And intellectual strength so rare a boon—  
 I prized such walks still more, for there  
 I found  
 Hope to my hope, and to my pleasure  
 peace 180  
 And steadiness, and healing and repose  
 To every angry passion. There I heard,  
 From mouths of men obscure and lowly,  
 truths  
 Replete with honour ; sounds in unison  
 With loftiest promises of good and fair.

There are who think that strong af-  
 fection, love 186  
 Known by whatever name, is falsely  
 deemed  
 A gift, to use a term which they would use,  
 Of vulgar nature ; that its growth requires  
 Retirement, leisure, language purified  
 By manners studied and elaborate ; 191  
 That whoso feels such passion in its  
 strength  
 Must live within the very light and air  
 Of courteous usages refined by art.  
 True is it, where oppression worse than  
 death 195  
 Salutes the being at his birth, where grace  
 Of culture hath been utterly unknown,  
 And poverty and labour in excess  
 From day to day pre-occupy the ground

Of the affections, and to Nature's self 200  
Oppose a deeper nature; there, indeed,  
Love cannot be; nor does it thrive with  
ease

Among the close and overcrowded haunts  
Of cities, where the human heart is sick,  
And the eye feeds it not, and cannot  
feed. 205

—Yes, in those wanderings deeply did  
I feel

How we mislead each other; above all,  
How books mislead us, seeking their re-  
ward

From judgments of the wealthy Few,  
who see

By artificial lights; how they debase 210  
The Many for the pleasure of those Few;  
Effeminately level down the truth

To certain general notions, for the sake  
Of being understood at once, or else  
Through want of better knowledge in the  
heads 215

That framed them; flattering self-conceit  
with words,

That, while they most ambitiously set  
forth

Extrinsic differences, the outward marks  
Whereby society has parted man

From man, neglect the universal heart. 220

Here, calling up to mind what then  
I saw,

A youthful traveller, and see daily now  
In the familiar circuit of my home,  
Here might I pause, and bend in reve-  
rence

To Nature, and the power of human  
minds, 225

To men as they are men within them-  
selves.

How oft high service is performed within,  
When all the external man is rude in  
show,—

Not like a temple rich with pomp and  
gold,

But a mere mountain-chapel, that protects  
Its simple worshippers from sun and  
shower. 231

Of these, said I, shall be my song; of  
these,

If future years mature me for the task,

Will I record the praises, making verse  
Deal boldly with substantial things; in  
truth 235

And sanctity of passion, speak of these,  
That justice may be done, obeisance paid  
Where it is due: thus haply shall I teach,  
Inspire; through unadulterated ears

Pour rapture, tenderness, and hope,—my  
theme 240

No other than the very heart of man,  
As found among the best of those who  
live—

Not unexalted by religious faith,  
Nor uninformed by books, good books,  
though few—

In Nature's presence: thence may I  
select 245

Sorrow, that is not sorrow, but delight;  
And miserable love, that is not pain  
To hear of, for the glory that redounds  
Therefrom to human kind, and what we  
are.

Be mine to follow with no timid step 250  
Where knowledge leads me: it shall be  
my pride

That I have dared to tread this holy  
ground,

Speaking no dream, but things oracular;  
Matter not lightly to be heard by those  
Who to the letter of the outward pro-  
mise 255

Do read the invisible soul; by men adroit  
In speech, and for communion with the  
world

Accomplished; minds whose faculties are  
then

Most active when they are most eloquent,  
And elevated most when most admired.

Men may be found of other mould than  
these, 261

Who are their own upholders, to them-  
selves

Encouragement, and energy, and will,  
Expressing liveliest thoughts in lively  
words 264

As native passion dictates. Others, too,  
There are among the walks of homely life  
Still higher, men for contemplation  
framed,

Shy, and unpractised in the strife of  
phrase;

Meek men, whose very souls perhaps  
would sink  
Beneath them, summoned to such inter-  
course : 270  
Theirs is the language of the heavens, the  
power,  
The thought, the image, and the silent joy :  
Words are but under-agents in their  
souls ;  
When they are grasping with their great-  
est strength,  
They do not breathe among them : this  
I speak 275  
In gratitude to God, Who feeds our  
hearts  
For His own service ; knoweth, loveth us,  
When we are unregarded by the world.

Also, about this time did I receive  
Convictions still more strong than hereto-  
fore, 280  
Not only that the inner frame is good,  
And graciously composed, but that, no  
less,  
Nature for all conditions wants not  
power  
To consecrate, if we have eyes to see,  
The outside of her creatures, and to  
breathe 285  
Grandeur upon the very humblest face  
Of human life. I felt that the array  
Of act and circumstance, and visible form,  
Is mainly to the pleasure of the mind  
What passion makes them ; that mean-  
while the forms 290  
Of Nature have a passion in themselves,  
That intermingles with those works of  
man  
To which she summons him ; although  
the works  
Be mean, have nothing lofty of their own ;  
And that the Genius of the Poet hence 295  
May boldly take his way among mankind  
Wherever Nature leads ; that he hath  
stood  
By Nature's side among the men of old,  
And so shall stand for ever. Dearest  
Friend !  
If thou partake the animating faith 300  
That Poets, even as Prophets, each with  
each

Connected in a mighty scheme of truth,  
Have each his own peculiar faculty,  
Heaven's gift, a sense that fits him to  
perceive  
Objects unseen before, thou wilt not  
blame 305  
The humblest of this band who dares to  
hope  
That unto him hath also been vouchsafed  
An insight that in some sort he possesses,  
A privilege whereby a work of his,  
Proceeding from a source of untaught  
things, 310  
Creative and enduring, may become  
A power like one of Nature's. To a hope  
Not less ambitious once among the wilds  
Of Sarum's Plain, my youthful spirit was  
raised ;  
There, as I ranged at will the pastoral  
downs 315  
Trackless and smooth, or paced the bare  
white roads  
Lengthening in solitude their dreary line,  
Time with his retinue of ages fled  
Backwards, nor checked his flight until I  
saw  
Our dim ancestral Past in vision clear ;  
Saw multitudes of men, and, here and  
there, 321  
A single Briton clothed in wolf-skin vest,  
With shield and stone-axe, stride across  
the wold ;  
The voice of spears was heard, the rattling  
spear  
Shaken by arms of mighty bone, in  
strength, 325  
Long mouldered, of barbaric majesty.  
I called on Darkness—but before the word  
Was uttered, midnight darkness seemed  
to take  
All objects from my sight ; and lo ! again  
The Desert visible by dismal flames ; 330  
It is the sacrificial altar, fed  
With living men—how deep the groans !  
the voice  
Of those that crowd the giant wicker  
thrills  
The monumental hillocks, and the pomp  
Is for both worlds, the living and the dead.  
At other moments—for through that  
wide waste 336

Three summer days I roamed) where'er  
 the Plain  
 Was figured o'er with circles, lines, or  
 mounds,  
 That yet survive, a work, as some divine,  
 Shaped by the Druids, so to represent  
 Their knowledge of the heavens, and  
 image forth 341  
 The constellations—gently was I charmed  
 Into a waking dream, a reverie  
 That, with believing eyes, where'er I  
 turned,  
 Beheld long-bearded teachers, with white  
 wands 345  
 Uplifted, pointing to the starry sky,  
 Alternately, and plain below, while breath  
 Of music swayed their motions, and the  
 waste  
 Rejoiced with them and me in those  
 sweet sounds.

This for the past, and things that may  
 be viewed 350  
 Or fancied in the obscurity of years  
 From monumental hints: and thou, O  
 Friend!  
 Pleased with some unpremeditated strains  
 That served those wanderings to beguile,  
 hast said

That then and there my mind had exer-  
 cised 355  
 Upon the vulgar forms of present things,  
 The actual world of our familiar days,  
 Yet higher power; had caught from them  
 a tone,  
 An image, and a character, by books  
 Not hitherto reflected. Call we this 360  
 A partial judgment—and yet why? for  
 then  
 We were as strangers; and I may not  
 speak  
 Thus wrongfully of verse, however rude,  
 Which on thy young imagination, trained  
 In the great City, broke like light from far.  
 Moreover, each man's Mind is to herself  
 Witness and judge; and I remember well  
 That in life's every-day appearances  
 I seemed about this time to gain clear sight  
 Of a new world—a world, too, that was fit  
 To be transmitted, and to other eyes 371  
 Made visible; as ruled by those fixed laws  
 Whence spiritual dignity originates,  
 Which do both give it being and maintain  
 A balance, an ennobling interchange 375  
 Of action from without and from within;  
 The excellence, pure function, and best  
 power  
 Both of the object seen, and eye that sees.

Was there, nor loss; only the inferior stars  
Had disappeared, or shed a fainter light  
In the clear presence of the full-orbed  
Moon,

Who, from her sovereign elevation, gazed  
Upon the billowy ocean, as it lay 55  
All meek and silent, save that through a  
rift—

Not distant from the shore whereon we  
stood,

A fixed, abysmal, gloomy, breathing-  
place—

Mounted the roar of waters, torrents,  
streams

Innumerable, roaring with one voice! 60  
Heard over earth and sea, and, in that  
hour,

For so it seemed, felt by the starry  
heavens.

When into air had partially dissolved  
That vision, given to spirits of the night  
And three chance human wanderers, in  
calm thought 65

Reflected, it appeared to me the type  
Of a majestic intellect, its acts  
And its possessions, what it has and  
craves,

What in itself it is, and would become.  
There I beheld the emblem of a mind 70  
That feeds upon infinity, that broods  
Over the dark abyss, intent to hear  
Its voices issuing forth to silent light  
In one continuous stream; a mind sus-  
tained

By recognitions of transcendent power,  
In sense conducting to ideal form, 76  
In soul of more than mortal privilege.  
One function, above all, of such a mind  
Had Nature shadowed there, by putting  
forth,

'Mid circumstances awful and sublime, 80  
That mutual domination which she loves  
To exert upon the face of outward things,  
So moulded, joined, abstracted, so en-  
dowed

With interchangeable supremacy,  
That men, least sensitive, see, hear, per-  
ceive, 85

And cannot choose but feel. The power,  
which all

Acknowledge when thus moved, which  
Nature thus

To bodily sense exhibits, is the express  
Resemblance of that glorious faculty  
That higher minds bear with them as  
their own. 90

This is the very spirit in which they deal  
With the whole compass of the universe:  
They from their native selves can send  
abroad

Kindred mutations; for themselves create  
A like existence; and, whenever it dawns  
Created for them, catch it, or are caught  
By its inevitable mastery,

Like angels stopped upon the wing by  
sound

Of harmony from Heaven's remotest  
spheres.

Them the enduring and the transient  
both 100

Serve to exalt; they build up greatest  
things

From least suggestions; ever on the  
watch,

Willing to work and to be wrought upon,  
They need not extraordinary calls

To rouse them; in a world of life they  
live, 105

By sensible impressions not enthralled,  
But by their quickening impulse made  
more prompt

To hold fit converse with the spiritual  
world,

And with the generations of mankind  
Spread over time, past, present, and to  
come, 110

Age after age, till Time shall be no more.  
Such minds are truly from the Deity,  
For they are Powers; and hence the  
highest bliss

That flesh can know is theirs—the con-  
sciousness

Of Whom they are, habitually infused  
Through every image and through every  
thought, 116

And all affections by communion raised  
From earth to heaven, from human to  
divine;

Hence endless occupation for the Soul,  
Whether discursive or intuitive; 120

Hence cheerfulness for acts of daily life,

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Emotions which best foresight need not<br>fear,      | Of selfish passions; nor did ever yield                     |
| Most worthy then of trust when most<br>intense.      | Wilfully to mean cares or low pursuits,                     |
| Hence, amid ills that vex and wrongs<br>that crush   | But shrunk with apprehensive jealousy                       |
| Our hearts—if here the words of Holy<br>Writ 125     | From every combination which might aid                      |
| May with fit reverence be applied—that<br>peace      | The tendency, too potent in itself,                         |
| Which passeth understanding, that repose             | Of use and custom to bow down the soul                      |
| In moral judgments which from this pure<br>source    | Under a growing weight of vulgar sense,                     |
| Must come, or will by man be sought in<br>vain.      | And substitute a universe of death 160                      |
| Oh! who is he that hath his whole life<br>long 130   | For that which moves with light and life<br>informed,       |
| Preserved, enlarged, this freedom in him-<br>self?   | Actual, divine, and true. To fear and love,                 |
| For this alone is genuine liberty:                   | To love as prime and chief, for there fear<br>ends,         |
| Where is the favoured being who hath<br>held         | Be this ascribed; to early intercourse,                     |
| That course unchecked, unerring, and un-<br>tired,   | In presence of sublime or beautiful forms,                  |
| In one perpetual progress smooth and<br>bright?— 135 | With the adverse principles of pain and<br>joy— 166         |
| A humbler destiny have we retraced,                  | Evil as one is rashly named by men                          |
| And told of lapse and hesitating choice,             | Who know not what they speak. By love<br>subsists           |
| And backward wanderings along thorny<br>ways:        | All lasting grandeur, by pervading love; 1                  |
| Yet—compassed round by mountain soli-<br>tudes,      | That gone, we are as dust.—Behold the<br>fields 170         |
| Within whose solemn temple I received                | In balmy spring-time full of rising flowers                 |
| My earliest visitations, careless then 141           | And joyous creatures; see that pair, the<br>lamb            |
| Of what was given me; and which now I<br>range,      | And the lamb's mother, and their tender<br>ways             |
| A meditative, oft a suffering, man—                  | Shall touch thee to the heart; thou call-<br>est this love, |
| Do I declare—in accents which, from<br>truth         | And not inaptly so, for love it is, 175                     |
| Deriving cheerful confidence, shall blend            | Far as it carries thee. In some green<br>bower              |
| Their modulation with these vocal<br>streams— 146    | Rest, and benot alone, but have thou there                  |
| That, whatsoever falls my better mind,               | The One who is thy choice of all the<br>world:              |
| Revolving with the accidents of life,                | There linger, listening, gazing, with de-<br>light          |
| May have sustained, that, howsoever mis-<br>led,     | Impassioned, but delight how pitiable!                      |
| Never did I, in quest of right and wrong,            | Unless this love by a still higher love 181                 |
| Tamper with conscience from a private<br>aim; 151    | Be hallowed, love that breathes not with-<br>out awe;       |
| Nor was in any public hope the dupe                  | Love that adores, but on the knees of<br>prayer,            |
|  | By heaven inspired; that frees from<br>chains the soul,     |
|  | Lifted, in union with the purest, best, 185                 |
|  | Of earth-born passions, on the wings of<br>praise           |
|  | Bearing a tribute to the Almighty's<br>Throne.              |

This spiritual Love acts not nor can  
 exist  
 Without Imagination, which, in truth,  
 Is but another name for absolute power  
 And clearest insight, amplitude of mind,  
 And Reason in her most exalted mood.  
 This faculty hath been the feeding source  
 Of our long labour: we have traced the  
 stream  
 From the blind cavern whence is faintly  
 heard 195  
 Its natal murmur; followed it to light  
 And open day; accompanied its course  
 Among the ways of Nature, for a time  
 Lost sight of it bewildered and engulfed;  
 Then given it greeting as it rose once  
 more 200  
 In strength, reflecting from its placid  
 breast  
 The works of man and face of human life;  
 And lastly, from its progress have we  
 drawn  
 Faith in life endless, the sustaining  
 thought  
 Of human Being, Eternity, and God. 205

Imagination having been our theme,  
 So also hath that intellectual Love,  
 For they are each in each, and cannot  
 stand  
 Dividually.—Here must thou be, O Man!  
 Power to thyself; no Helper hast thou  
 here; 210  
 Here keepest thou in singleness thy state:  
 No other can divide with thee this work:  
 No secondary hand can intervene  
 To fashion this ability; 'tis thine,  
 The prime and vital principle is thine 215  
 In the recesses of thy nature, far  
 From any reach of outward fellowship,  
 Else is not thine at all. But joy to him,  
 Oh, joy to him who here hath sown, hath  
 laid  
 Here, the foundation of his future years!  
 For all that friendship, all that love can  
 do, 221  
 All that a darling countenance can look  
 Or dear voice utter, to complete the man,  
 Perfect him, made imperfect in himself,  
 All shall be his: and he whose soul hath  
 risen 225

Up to the height of feeling intellect  
 Shall want no humbler tenderness; his  
 heart  
 Be tender as a nursing mother's heart;  
 Of female softness shall his life be full,  
 Of humble cares and delicate desires, 230  
 Mild interests and gentlest sympathies.

Child of my parents! Sister of my soul!  
 Thanks in sincerest verse have been else-  
 where  
 Poured out for all the early tenderness  
 Which I from thee imbibed: and 'tis  
 most true 235  
 That later seasons owed to thee no less;  
 For, spite of thy sweet influence and the  
 touch  
 Of kindred hands that opened out the  
 springs  
 Of genial thought in childhood, and in spite  
 Of all that unassisted I had marked 240  
 In life or nature of those charms minute  
 That win their way into the heart by  
 stealth,  
 Still (to the very going-out of youth)  
 I too exclusively esteemed *that* love,  
 And sought *that* beauty, which, as Milton  
 sings, 245  
 Hath terror in it. Thou didst soften down  
 This over-stereness; but for thee, dear  
 Friend!  
 My soul, too reckless of mild grace, had  
 stood  
 In her original self too confident,  
 Retained too long a countenance severe;  
 A rock with torrents roaring, with the  
 clouds 251  
 Familiar, and a favourite of the stars:  
 But thou didst plant its crevices with  
 flowers,  
 Hang it with shrubs that twinkle in the  
 breeze,  
 And teach the little birds to build their  
 nests 255  
 And warble in its chambers. At a time  
 When Nature, destined to remain so long  
 Foremost in my affections, had fallen back  
 Into a second place, pleased to become  
 A handmaid to a nobler than herself, 260  
 When every day brought with it some  
 new sense

Of exquisite regard for common things,  
And all the earth was budding with these  
gifts

Of more refined humanity, thy breath,  
Dear Sister! was a kind of gentler spring  
That went before my steps. Thereafter  
came 256

One whom with thee friendship had early  
paired;

She came, no more a phantom to adorn  
A moment, but an inmate of the heart,  
And yet a spirit, there for me enshrined  
To penetrate the lofty and the low; 271  
Even as one essence of pervading light  
Shines, in the brightest of ten thousand  
stars,

And, the meek worm that feeds her lonely  
lamp

Couched in the dewy grass.

With such a theme,  
Coleridge! with this my argument, of  
thee 276

Shall I be silent? O capacious Soul!  
Placed on this earth to love and under-  
stand,

And from thy presence shed the light of  
love,

Shall I be mute, ere thou be spoken of?  
Thy kindred influence to my heart of  
hearts 281

Did also find its way. Thus fear relaxed  
Her overweening grasp; thus thoughts  
and things

In the self-haunting spirit learned to take  
More rational proportions; mystery, 285  
The incumbent mystery of sense and soul,  
Of life and death, time and eternity,  
Admitted more habitually a mild  
Interposition—a serene delight

In closelier gathering cares, such as be-  
come 290

A human creature, howsoever endowed,  
Poet, or destined for a humbler name;  
And so the deep enthusiastic joy,  
The rapture of the hallelujah sent  
From all that breathes and is, was chas-  
tened, stemmed 295

And balanced by pathetic truth, by trust  
In hopeful reason, leaning on the stay  
Of Providence; and in reverence for  
duty,

Here, if need be, struggling with storms,  
and there

Strewing in peace life's humblest ground  
with herbs, 300

At every season green, sweet at all hours.

And now, O Friend! this history is  
brought

To its appointed close: the discipline  
And consummation of a Poet's mind,  
In everything that stood most prominent,  
Have faithfully been pictured; we have  
reached 306

The time (our guiding object from the  
first) 6

When we may, not presumptuously, I  
hope,

Suppose my powers so far confirmed, and  
such 309

My knowledge, as to make me capable  
Of building up a Work that shall endure.  
Yet much hath been omitted, as need  
was;

Of books how much! and even of the  
other wealth

That is collected among woods and fields,  
Far more: for Nature's secondary grace  
Hath hitherto been barely touched upon,  
The charm more superficial that attends  
Her works, as they present to Fancy's  
choice

Apt illustrations of the moral world,  
Caught at a glance, or traced with curi-  
ous pains. 320

Finally, and above all, O Friend! (I  
speak

With due regret) how much is overlooked  
In human nature and her subtle ways,  
As studied first in our own hearts, and  
then 324

In life among the passions of mankind,  
Varying their composition and their hue,  
Where'er we move, under the diverse  
shapes

That individual character presents  
To an attentive eye. For progress meet,  
Along this intricate and difficult path,  
Whate'er was wanting, something had I  
gained, 331

As one of many schoolfellows compelled,

In hardy independence, to stand up  
Amid conflicting interests, and the shock  
Of various tempers; to endure and note  
What was not understood, though known  
to be; 336

Among the mysteries of love and hate,  
Honour and shame, looking to right and  
left,

Unchecked by innocence too delicate,  
And moral notions too intolerant, 340  
Sympathies too contracted. Hence, when  
called

To take a station among men, the step  
Was easier, the transition more secure,  
More profitable also; for the mind 344  
Learns from such timely exercise to keep  
In wholesome separation the two natures,  
The one that feels, the other that observes.

Yet one word more of personal concern;—

Since I withdrew unwillingly from France,  
I led an undomestic wanderer's life, 350  
In London chiefly harboured, whence I  
roamed,

Tarrying at will in many a pleasant spot  
Of rural England's cultivated vales  
Or Cambrian solitudes. A youth—(he  
bore

The name of Calvert—it shall live, if  
words 355

Of mine can give it life,) in firm belief  
That by endowments not from me withheld

Good might be furthered—in his last  
decay

By a bequest sufficient for my needs  
Enabled me to pause for choice, and  
walk 360

At large and unrestrained, nor damped  
too soon

By mortal cares. Himself no Poet, yet  
Far less a common follower of the world,  
He deemed that my pursuits and labours  
lay

Apart from all that leads to wealth, or  
even 365

A necessary maintenance insures,  
Without some hazard to the finer sense;  
He cleared a passage for me, and the  
stream

Flowed in the bent of Nature.

Having now  
Told what best merits mention, further  
pains 370

Our present purpose seems not to require,  
And I have other tasks. Recall to mind  
The mood in which this labour was begun,

O Friend! The termination of my course  
Is nearer now, much nearer; yet even  
then, 375

In that distraction and intense desire,  
I said unto the life which I had lived,  
Where art thou? Hear I not a voice from  
thee

Which 'tis reproach to hear? Anon I  
rose

As if on wings, and saw beneath me  
stretched 380

Vast prospect of the world which I had  
been

And was; and hence this Song, which  
like a lark

I have protracted, in the unwearied  
heavens

Singing, and often with more plaintive  
voice

To earth attempered and her deep-drawn  
sighs, 385

Yet centring all in love, and in the end  
All gratulant, if rightly understood.

Whether to me shall be allotted life,  
And, with life, power to accomplish aught  
of worth,

That will be deemed no insufficient plea  
For having given the story of myself, 391  
Is all uncertain: but, beloved Friend!

When, looking back, thou seest, in clearer  
view

Than any liveliest sight of yesterday,  
That summer, under whose indulgent  
skies, 395

Upon smooth Quantock's airy ridge we  
roved

Unchecked, or loitered 'mid her sylvan  
combs,

Thou in bewitching words, with happy  
heart,

Didst chaunt the vision of that Ancient  
Man,

The bright-eyed Mariner, and rueful  
woes 400

Didst utter of the Lady Christabel;  
And I, associate with such labour, steeped  
In soft forgetfulness the livelong hours,  
Murmuring of him who, joyous hap, was  
found,

After the perils of his moonlight ride, 405  
Near the loud waterfall; or her who sate  
In misery near the miserable Thorn;—  
When thou dost to that summer turn thy  
thoughts,

And hast before thee all which then we  
were,

To thee, in memory of that happiness,  
It will be known, by thee at least, my  
Friend! 411

Felt, that the history of a Poet's mind  
Is labour not unworthy of regard:  
To thee the work shall justify itself.

The last and later portions of this gift  
Have been prepared, not with the buoy-  
ant spirits 416

That were our daily portion when we  
first

Together wantoned in wild Poesy,  
But, under pressure of a private grief,  
Keen and enduring, which the mind and  
heart, 420

That in this meditative history  
Have been laid open, needs must make  
me feel

More deeply, yet enable me to bear  
More firmly; and a comfort now hath  
risen

From hope that thou art near, and wilt  
be soon 425

Restored to us in renovated health;  
When, after the first mingling of our  
tears

'Mong other consolations, we may draw  
Some pleasure from this offering of my  
love.

Oh! yet a few short years of useful life,  
And all will be complete, thy race be  
run, 431

Thy monument of glory will be raised;  
Then, though (too weak to tread the ways  
of truth)

This age fall back to old idolatry, 434  
Though men return to servitude as fast  
As the tide ebbs, to ignominy and shame  
By nations sink together, we shall still  
Find solace,—knowing what we have  
learnt to know,

Rich in true happiness if allowed to be  
Faithful alike in forwarding a day 440  
Of firmer trust, joint labourers in the  
work

(Should Providence such grace to us  
vouchsafe)

Of their deliverance, surely yet to come.  
Prophets of Nature, we to them will  
speak

A lasting inspiration, sanctified 445  
By reason, blest by faith: what we have  
loved,

Others will love, and we will teach them  
how;

Instruct them how the mind of man  
becomes

A thousand times more beautiful than  
the earth

On which he dwells, above this frame of  
things 450

(Which, 'mid all revolution in the hopes  
And fears of men, doth still remain un-  
changed)

In beauty exalted, as it is itself  
Of quality and fabric more divine.

# The Excursion.

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TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
WILLIAM, EARL OF LONSDALE, K.G.,  
ETC., ETC.

OFF, through thy fair domains, illustrious Peer!  
In youth I roamed, on youthful pleasures bent;  
And mused in rocky cell or sylvan tent,  
Beside swift-flowing Lowther's current clear.  
—Now, by thy care befriended, I appear  
Before thee, LONSDALE, and this Work present,  
A token (may it prove a monument!)  
Of high respect and gratitude sincere.  
Gladly would I have waited till my task  
Had reached its close; but Life is insecure,  
And Hope full oft fallacious as a dream:  
Therefore, for what is here produced, I ask  
Thy favour; trusting that thou wilt not deem  
The offering, though imperfect, premature.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, WESTMORELAND,  
*July 29. 1814.*

## PREFACE TO THE EDITION OF 1814.

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THE Title-page announces that this is only a portion of a poem; and the Reader must be here apprised that it belongs to the second part of a long and laborious Work, which is to consist of three parts.—The Author will candidly acknowledge that, if the first of these had been completed, and in such a manner as to satisfy his own mind, he should have preferred the natural order of publication, and have given that to the world first; but, as the second division of the Work was designed to refer more to passing events, and to an existing state of things, than the others were meant to do, more continuous exertion was naturally bestowed upon it, and greater progress made here than in the rest of the poem; and as this part does not depend upon the preceding, to a degree which will materially injure its own peculiar interest, the Author, complying with the earnest entreaties of some valued Friends, presents the following pages to the Public.

It may be proper to state whence the poem, of which "The Excursion" is a part, derives its Title of *THE RECLUSE*.—Several years ago, when the Author retired to his native mountains, with the hope of being enabled to construct a literary Work that might live, it was a reasonable thing that he should take a review of his own mind, and examine how far Nature and Education had qualified him for such employment. As subsidiary to this preparation, he undertook to record, in verse, the origin and progress of his own powers, as far as he was acquainted with them. That Work, addressed to a dear Friend, most distinguished for his knowledge and genius, and to whom the Author's Intellect is deeply indebted, has been long finished; and the result of the investigation which gave rise to it was a determination to compose a philosophical poem, containing views of Man, Nature, and Society; and to be entitled, "*The Recluse*;" as having for

its principal subject the sensations and opinions of a poet living in retirement.—The preparatory poem is biographical, and conducts the history of the Author's mind to the point when he was emboldened to hope that his faculties were sufficiently matured for entering upon the arduous labour which he had proposed to himself; and the two Works have the same kind of relation to each other, if he may so express himself, as the ante-chapel has to the body of a gothic church. Continuing this allusion, he may be permitted to add, that his minor Pieces, which have been long before the Public, when they shall be properly arranged, will be found by the attentive Reader to have such connection with the main Work as may give them claim to be likened to the little cells, oratories, and sepulchral recesses, ordinarily included in those edifices.

The Author would not have deemed himself justified in saying, upon this occasion, so much of performances either unfinished, or unpublished, if he had not thought that the labour bestowed by him upon what he has heretofore and now laid before the Public, entitled him to candid attention for such a statement as he thinks necessary to throw light upon his endeavours to please and, he would hope, to benefit his countrymen.—Nothing further need be added, than that the first and third parts of "*The Recluse*" will consist chiefly of meditations in the Author's own person; and that in the intermediate part ("*The Excursion*") the intervention of characters speaking is employed, and something of a dramatic form adopted.

It is not the Author's intention formally to announce a system: it was more animating to him to proceed in a different course; and if he shall succeed in conveying to the mind clear thoughts, lively images, and strong feelings, the Reader will have no difficulty in extracting the

system for himself. And in the meantime the following passage, taken from the conclusion of the first book of "The Recluse," may be acceptable as a kind of *Prospectus* of the design and scope of the whole Poem.

"On Man, on Nature, and on Human Life,  
Musing in solitude, I oft perceive  
Fair trains of imagery before me rise,  
Accompanied by feelings of delight  
Pure, or with no unpleasing sadness mixed ; 5  
And I am conscious of affecting thoughts  
And dear remembrances, whose presence soothes  
Or elevates the Mind, intent to weigh  
The good and evil of our mortal state.  
—To these emotions, whence so'er they come, 10  
Whether from breath of outward circumstance,  
Or from the Soul—an impulse to herself—  
I would give utterance in numerous verse.  
Of Truth, of Grandeur, Beauty, Love, and Hope,  
And melancholy Fear subdued by Faith ; 15  
Of blessed consolations in distress ;  
Of moral strength, and intellectual Power ;  
Of joy in widest commonalty spread ;  
Of the individual Mind that keeps her own  
Inviolate retirement, subject there 20  
To Conscience only, and the law supreme  
Of that Intelligence which governs all—  
I sing :—'fit audience let me find though few !'

"So prayed, more gaining than he asked, the  
Bard—  
In holiest mood. Urania, I shall need 25  
Thy guidance, or a greater Muse, if such  
Descend to earth or dwell in highest heaven !  
For I must tread on shadowy ground, must sink  
Deep—and, aloft ascending, breathe in worlds  
To which the heaven of heavens is but a veil. 30  
All strength—all terror, single or in bands,  
That ever was put forth in personal form—  
Jehovah—with his thunder, and the choir  
Of shouting Angels, and the empyreal thrones—  
I pass them unalarmed. Not Chaos, not 35  
The darkest pit of lowest Erebus,  
Nor aught of blinder vacancy, scooped out  
By help of dreams—can breed such fear and awe  
As fall upon us often when we look  
Into our Minds, into the Mind of Man— 40  
My haunt, and the main region of my song.  
—Beauty—a living Presence of the earth,  
Surpassing the most fair Ideal Forms  
Which craft of delicate Spirits hath composed  
From earth's materials—waits upon my steps ;  
Pitches her tents before me as I move, 46  
An hourly neighbour. Paradise, and groves  
Elysian, Fortunate Fields—like those of old  
Sought in the Atlantic Main—why should they be  
A history only of departed things, 50

Or a mere fiction of what never was ?  
For the discerning intellect of Man,  
When wedded to this goodly universe  
In love and holy passion, shall find these  
A simple produce of the common day. 55  
—I, long before the blissful hour arrives,  
Would chant, in lonely peace, the spousal verse  
Of this great consummation :—and, by words  
Which speak of nothing more than what we are,  
Would I arouse the sensual from their sleep 60  
Of Death, and win the vacant and the vain  
To noble raptures ; while my voice proclaims  
How exquisitely the individual Mind  
(And the progressive powers perhaps no less  
Of the whole species) to the external World 65  
Is fitted :—and how exquisitely, too—  
Theme this but little heard of among men—  
The external World is fitted to the Mind ;  
And the creation (by no lower name  
Can it be called) which they with blended might  
Accomplish :—this is our high argument. 71  
—Such grateful haunts foregoing, if I oft  
Must turn elsewhere—to travel near the tribes  
And fellowships of men, and see ill sights  
Of madding passions mutually inflamed ; 75  
Must hear Humanity in fields and groves  
Pipe solitary anguish ; or must hang  
Brooding above the fierce confederate storm  
Of sorrow, barricaded evermore  
Within the walls of cities—may these sounds 80  
Have their authentic comment ; that even these  
Hearing, I be not downcast or forlorn !—  
Descend, prophetic Spirit ! that inspir'd  
The human Soul of universal earth,  
Dreaming on things to come ; and dost possess 86  
A metropolitan temple in the hearts  
Of mighty Poets : upon me bestow  
A gift of genuine insight ; that my Song  
With star-like virtue in its place may shine,  
Shedding benignant influence, and secure, 90  
Itself, from all malevolent effect  
Of those mutations that extend their sway  
Throughout the nether sphere !—And if with  
this  
I mix more lowly matter ; with the thing  
Contemplated, describe the Mind and Man 95  
Contemplating ; and who, and what he was—  
The transitory Being that beheld  
This Vision ; when and where, and how he  
lived :—  
Be not this labour useless. If such theme  
May sort with highest objects, then—dread 100  
Power !  
Whose gracious favour is the primal source  
Of all illumination,—may my Life  
Express the image of a better time,  
More wise desires, and simpler manners ;—nurse  
My Heart in genuine freedom :—all pure thoughts  
Be with me ;—so shall thy unfalling love 106  
Guide, and support, and cheer me to the end !"

# The Excursion.

## BOOK FIRST.

### THE WANDERER.

#### ARGUMENT.

A summer forenoon.—The Author reaches a ruined Cottage upon a Common, and there meets with a revered Friend, the Wanderer, of whose education and course of life he gives an account.—The Wanderer, while resting under the shade of the Trees that surround the Cottage, relates the History of its last Inhabitant.

|  |   |
|--|---|
| 'Twas summer, and the sun had mounted<br>high :<br>Southward the landscape indistinctly<br>glared<br>Through a pale steam; but all the north-<br>ern downs,<br>In clearest air ascending, showed far off<br>A surface dappled o'er with shadows<br>flung<br>From brooding clouds; shadows that lay<br>in spots<br>Determined and unmoved, with steady<br>beams<br>Of bright and pleasant sunshine inter-<br>posed;<br>To him most pleasant who on soft cool<br>moss<br>Extends his careless limbs along the<br>front<br>Of some huge cave, whose rocky ceiling<br>casts<br>A twilight of its own, an ample shade,<br>Where the wren warbles, while the dream-<br>ing man,<br>Half conscious of the soothing melody,<br>With side-long eye looks out upon the<br>scene,<br>By power of that impending covert,<br>thrown<br>To finer distance. Mine was at that hour<br>Far other lot, yet with good hope that<br>soon<br>Under a shade as grateful I should find<br>Rest, and be welcomed there to livelier<br>joy. | Across a bare wide Common I was toiling<br>With languid steps that by the slippery<br>turf<br>Were baffled; nor could my weak arm<br>disperse<br>The host of insects gathering round my<br>face,<br>And ever with me as I paced along. 25<br><br>Upon that open moorland stood a grove,<br>The wished-for port to which my course<br>was bound.<br>Thither I came, and there, amid the<br>gloom<br>Spread by a brotherhood of lofty elms,<br>Appeared a roofless Hut; four naked<br>walls<br>That stared upon each other!—I looked<br>round,<br>And to my wish and to my hope espied<br>The Friend I sought; a Man of reverend<br>age,<br>But stout and hale, for travel unimpaired.<br>There was he seen upon the cottage-<br>bench,<br>Recumbent in the shade, as if asleep; 35<br>An iron-pointed staff lay at his side.<br><br>Him had I marked the day before—<br>alone<br>And stationed in the public way, with<br>face<br>Turned toward the sun then setting,<br>while that staff<br>Afforded, to the figure of the man 40 |
|--|---|

Detained for contemplation or repose,  
Graceful support; his countenance as he  
stood

Was hidden from my view, and he re-  
mained

Unrecognised; but, stricken by the sight,  
With slackened footsteps I advanced, and  
soon

A glad congratulation we exchanged  
At such unthought-of meeting.—For the  
night

We parted, nothing willingly; and now  
He by appointment waited for me here, so  
Under the covert of these clustering elms.

We were tried Friends: amid a pleasant  
vale,

In the antique market-village where was  
passed

My school-time, an apartment he had  
owned,

To which at intervals the Wanderer drew,  
And found a kind of home or harbour  
there.

He loved me; from a swarm of rosy boys  
Singed out me, as he in sport would say,  
For my grave looks, too thoughtful for  
my years.

As I grew up, it was my best delight  
To be his chosen comrade. Many a time,  
On holidays, we rambled through the  
woods:

We satc—we walked; he pleased me with  
report

Of things which he had seen; and often  
touched

Abstrusest matter, reasonings of the  
mind

Turned inward; or at my request would  
sing

Old songs, the product of his native hills;  
A skilful distribution of sweet sounds,  
Feeding the soul, and eagerly imbibed  
As cool refreshing water, by the care  
Of the industrious husbandman, diffused  
Through a parched meadow-ground, in  
time of drought.

Still deeper welcome found his pure  
discourse:

How precious when in riper days I  
learned

To weigh with care his words, and to  
rejoice  
In the plain presence of his dignity!

Oh! many are the Poets that are  
sown

By Nature; men endowed with highest  
gifts,

The vision and the faculty divine;  
Yet wanting the accomplishment of  
verse,

(Which, in the docile season of their  
youth,

It was denied them to acquire, through  
lack

Of culture and the inspiring aid of books,  
Or haply by a temper too severe,

Or a nice backwardness afraid of shame)  
Nor having e'er, as life advanced, been  
led

By circumstance to take unto the height  
The measure of themselves, these favoured  
Beings,

All but a scattered few, live out their  
time,

Husbanding that which they possess  
within,

And go to the grave, unthought of.  
Strongest minds

Are often those of whom the noisy world  
Hears least; else surely this Man had not  
left

His graces unrevealed and unproclaimed.  
But, as the mind was filled with inward  
light,

So not without distinction had he lived,  
Beloved and honoured—far as he was  
known.

And some small portion of his eloquent  
speech,

And something that may serve to set in  
view

The feeling pleasures of his loneliness,  
His observations, and the thoughts his  
mind

Had dealt with—I will here record in  
verse;

Which, if with truth it correspond, and  
sink

Or rise as venerable Nature leads,  
The high and tender Muses shall accept

With gracious smile, deliberately pleased,  
And listening Time reward with sacred  
praise.

Among the hills of Athol he was born ;  
Where, on a small hereditary farm,  
An unproductive slip of rugged ground,  
His Parents, with their numerous off-  
spring, dwelt ; 111  
A virtuous household, though exceeding  
poor !  
Pure lives were they all, austere and  
grave,  
And fearing God ; the very children  
taught  
Stern self-respect, a reverence for God's  
word, 115  
And an habitual piety, maintained  
With strictness scarcely known on Eng-  
lish ground.

From his sixth year, the Boy of whom  
I speak,  
In summer, tended cattle on the hills ;  
But, through the inclement and the  
perilous days 120  
Of long-continuing winter, he repaired,  
Equipped with satchel, to a school, that  
stood  
Sole building on a mountain's dreary edge,  
Remote from view of city spire, or sound  
Of minster clock ! From that bleak tene-  
ment 125  
He, many an evening, to his distant  
home  
In solitude returning, saw the hills  
Grow larger in the darkness ; all alone  
Beheld the stars come out above his head,  
And travelled through the wood, with no  
one near 130  
To whom he might confess the things he  
saw.

So the foundations of his mind were  
laid,  
In such communion, not from terror free,  
While yet a child, and long before his  
time,  
Had he perceived the presence and the  
power 135  
Of greatness ; and deep feelings had  
impressed

So vividly great objects that they lay  
Upon his mind like substances, whose  
presence  
Perplexed the bodily sense. He had  
received,-  
A precious gift ; for, as he grew in years,  
With these impressions would he still  
compare 141  
All his remembrances, thoughts, shapes,  
and forms ;  
And, being still unsatisfied with aught  
Of dimmer character, he thence attained  
An active power to fasten images 145  
Upon his brain ; and on their pictured  
lines  
Intensely brooded, even till they acquired  
The liveliness of dreams. Nor did he  
fail,  
While yet a child, with a child's eager-  
ness  
Incessantly to turn his ear and eye 150  
On all things which the moving seasons  
brought  
To feed such appetite—nor this alone  
Appeased his yearning :—in the after-day  
Of boyhood, many an hour in caves  
forlorn,  
And 'mid the hollow depths of naked  
crags 155  
He sate, and even in their fixed line-  
ments,  
Or from the power of a peculiar eye,  
Or by creative feeling overborne,  
Or by predominance of thought op-  
pressed,  
Even in their fixed and steady line-  
ments 160  
He traced an ebbing and a flowing mind,  
Expression ever varying !  
Thus informed,  
He had small need of books ; for many a  
tale  
Traditional round the mountains hung,  
And many a legend, peopling the dark  
woods, 165  
Nourished Imagination in her growth,  
And gave the Mind that apprehensive  
power  
By which she is made quick to recognise  
The moral properties and scope of things.  
But eagerly he read, and read again, 170

Whate'er the minister's old shelf supplied;

The life and death of martyrs, who sustained,

With will inflexible, those fearful pangs  
Triumphantly displayed in records left  
Of persecution, and the Covenant—times  
Whose echo rings through Scotland to  
this hour! 176

And there, by lucky hap, had been preserved

A straggling volume, torn and incomplete,  
That left half-told the preternatural tale,  
Romance of giants, chronicle of fiends,  
Profuse in garniture of wooden cuts 181  
Strange and uncouth; dire faces, figures  
dire,

Sharp-kneed, sharp-elbowed, and lean-  
ankled too,

With long and ghostly shanks—forms  
which once seen  
Could never be forgotten!

In his heart,  
Where Fear sate thus, a cherished visitant, 186

Was wanting yet the pure delight of love  
By sound diffused, or by the breathing air,  
Or by the silent looks of happy things,  
Or flowing from the universal face 190  
Of earth and sky. But he had felt the  
power

Of Nature, and already was prepared,  
By his intense conceptions, to receive  
Deeply the lesson deep of love which he,  
Whom Nature, by whatever means, has  
taught 195

To feel intensely, cannot but receive.

Such was the Boy—but for the growing  
Youth.

What soul was his, when, from the naked  
top

Of some bold headland, he beheld the sun  
Rise up, and bathe the world in light!  
He looked— 200

Ocean and earth, the solid frame of earth  
And ocean's liquid mass, in gladness lay  
Beneath him:—Far and wide the clouds  
were touched,

And in their silent faces could he read  
Unutterable love. Sound needed none.

Nor any voice of joy; his spirit drank  
The spectacle: sensation, soul, and form,  
All melted into him; they swallowed up  
His animal being; in them did he live,  
And by them did he live; they were his  
life. 210

In such access of mind, in such high hour  
Of visitation from the living God,  
Thought was not; in enjoyment it expired.

No thanks he breathed, he proffered no  
request;

Rapt into still communion that transcends 215

The imperfect offices of prayer and praise,  
His mind was a thanksgiving to the  
power

That made him; it was blessedness and  
love!

A Herdsman on the lonely mountain-  
tops, 219

Such intercourse was his, and in this sort  
Was his existence oftentimes possessed.

O then how beautiful, how bright, appeared

The written promise! Early had he  
learned

To reverence the volume that displays  
The mystery, the life which cannot die;  
But in the mountains did he feel his  
faith. 226

All things, responsive to the writing,  
there

Breathed immortality, revolving life,  
And greatness still revolving; infinite:

There littleness was not; the least of  
things 230

Seemed infinite; and there his spirit  
shaped

Her prospects, nor did he believe,—he saw.  
What wonder if his being thus became

Sublime and comprehensive! Low desires,  
Low thoughts had there no place; yet  
was his heart 235

Lowly; for he was meek in gratitude,  
Oft as he called those ecstasies to mind,  
And whence they flowed; and from them  
he acquired

Wisdom, which works thro' patience;  
thence he learned

In oft-recurring hours of sober thought  
To look on Nature with a humble heart,  
Self-questioned where it did not under-stand,  
And with a superstitious eye of love.

So passed the time; yet to the nearest town  
He duly went with what small overplus  
His earnings might supply, and brought away 246  
The book that most had tempted his desires  
While at the stall he read. Among the hills  
He gazed upon that mighty orb of song,  
The divine Milton. Lore of different kind,  
The annual savings of a toilsome life, 251  
His Schoolmaster supplied; books that explain  
The purer elements of truth involved  
In lines and numbers, and, by charm severe,  
(Especially perceived where nature droops  
And feeling is suppressed) preserve the mind 256  
Busy in solitude and poverty.  
These occupations oftentimes deceived  
The listless hours, while in the hollow vale,  
Hollow and green, he lay on the green turf 260  
In pensive idleness. What could he do,  
Thus daily thirsting, in that lonesome life,  
With blind endeavours? Yet, still uppermost,  
Nature was at his heart as if he felt,  
Though yet he knew not how, a wasting power 265  
In all things that from her sweet influence  
Might tend to wean him. Therefore with her hues,  
Her forms, and with the spirit of her forms,  
He clothed the nakedness of austere truth.  
While yet he lingered in the rudiments  
Of science, and among her simplest laws,  
His triangles—they were the stars of heaven,  
The silent stars! Oft did he take delight  
To measure the altitude of some tall crag

That is the eagle's birthplace, or some peak 275  
Familiar with forgotten years, that shows  
Inscribed upon its visionary sides,  
The history of many a winter storm,  
Or obscure records of the path of fire.

And thus before his eighteenth year was told, 280  
Accumulated feelings pressed his heart  
With still increasing weight; he was o'er-powered  
By Nature; by the turbulence subdued  
Of his own mind; by mystery and hope,  
And the first virgin passion of a soul 285  
Communing with the glorious universe.  
Full often wished he that the winds might rage  
When they were silent: far more fondly now  
Than in his earlier season did he love  
Tempestuous nights—the conflict and the sounds 290  
That live in darkness. From his intellect  
And from the stillness of abstracted thought  
He asked repose; and, failing oft to win  
The peace required, he scanned the laws of light  
Amid the roar of torrents, where they send 295  
From hollow clefts up to the clearer air  
A cloud of mist, that smitten by the sun  
Varies its rainbow hues. But vainly thus,  
And vainly by all other means, he strove  
To mitigate the fever of his heart. 300

In dreams, in study, and in ardent thought,  
Thus was he reared; much wanting to assist  
The growth of intellect, yet gaining more,  
And every moral feeling of his soul  
Strengthened and braced, by breathing in content 305  
The keen, the wholesome, air of poverty,  
And drinking from the well of homely life.  
—But, from past liberty, and tried restraints,  
He now was summoned to select the course 309

Of humble industry that promised best  
To yield him no unworthy maintenance.  
Urged by his Mother, he essayed to teach  
A village-school—but wandering thoughts  
were then

A misery to him; and the Youth resigned  
A task he was unable to perform. 315

That stern yet kindly Spirit, who con-  
strains

The Savoyard to quit his naked rocks,  
The freeborn Swiss to leave his narrow  
vales,

(Spirit attached to regions mountainous  
Like their own steadfast clouds) did now  
impel 320

His restless mind to look abroad with  
hope.

—Anirksome drudgery seems it to plod on,  
Through hot and dusty ways, or pelting  
storm,

A vagrant Merchant under a heavy load  
Bent as he moves, and needing frequent  
rest; 325

Yet do such travellers find their own  
delight;

And their hard service, deemed debasing  
now,

Gained merited respect in simpler times;  
When squire, and priest, and they who  
round them dwelt

In rustic sequestration—all dependent  
Upon the PEDLAR's toil—supplied their  
wants, 331

Or pleased their fancies, with the wares  
he brought.

Not ignorant was the Youth that still no  
few

Of his adventurous countrymen were led  
By perseverante in this track of life 335  
To competence and ease:—to him it offered  
Attractions manifold;—and this he chose.

—His Parents on the enterprise bestowed  
Their farewell benediction, but with hearts  
Foreboding evil. From his native hills  
He wandered far; much did he see of  
men<sup>1</sup>,

Their manners, their enjoyments, and  
pursuits, 342

Their passions and their feelings; chiefly  
those

Essential and eternal in the heart,  
That, 'mid the simpler forms of rural life,  
Exist more simple in their elements, 346  
And speak a plainer language. In the  
woods,

A lone Enthusiast, and among the fields,  
Itinerant in this labour, he had passed  
The better portion of his time; and there  
Spontaneously had his affections thriven  
Amid the bounties of the year, the peace  
And liberty of nature; there he kept  
In solitude and solitary thought  
His mind in a just equipoise of love. 355

Serene it was, unclouded by the cares  
Of ordinary life; unvexed, unwarped  
By partial bondage. In his steady course,  
No piteous revolutions had he felt,  
No wild varieties of joy and grief. 360

Unoccupied by sorrow of its own,  
His heart lay open; and, by nature tuned  
And constant disposition of his thoughts  
To sympathy with man, he was alive  
To all that was enjoyed where'er he  
went, 365

And all that was endured; for, in himself  
Happy, and quiet in his cheerfulness,  
He had no painful pressure from without  
That made him turn aside from wretched-  
ness

With coward fears. He could afford to  
suffer 370

With those whom he saw suffer. Hence  
it came

That in our best experience he was rich,  
And in the wisdom of our daily life.

For hence, minutely, in his various rounds,  
He had observed the progress and decay  
Of many minds, of minds and bodies too;  
The history of many families;

How they had prospered; how they were  
o'erthrown

By passion or mischance, or such misrule  
Among the unthinking masters of the  
earth 380

As makes the nations groan.

This active course  
He followed till provision for his wants  
Had been obtained;—the Wanderer then  
resolved

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 926.

To pass the remnant of his days, untasked  
With needless services, from hardship  
free. 385

His calling laid aside, he lived at ease :  
But still he loved to pace the public roads  
And the wild paths; and, by the sum-  
mer's warmth

Invited, often would he leave his home  
And journey far, revisiting the scenes 390  
That to his memory were most endeared.

—Vigorous in health, of hopeful spirits,  
undamped

By worldly-mindedness or anxious care ;  
Observant, studious, thoughtful, and re-  
freshed

By knowledge gathered up from day to  
day ; 395

Thus had he lived a long and innocent  
life.

The Scottish Church, both on himself  
and those

With whom from childhood he grew up,  
had held

The strong hand of her purity ; and still  
Had watched him with an unrelenting eye.  
This he remembered in his riper age 401  
With gratitude, and reverential thoughts.  
But by the native vigour of his mind,  
By his habitual wanderings out of doors,  
By loneliness, and goodness, and kind  
works, 405

Whate'er, in docile childhood or in youth,  
He had imbibed of fear or darker thought  
Was melted all away ; so true was this,  
That sometimes his religion seemed to me  
Self-taught, as of a dreamer in the woods ;  
Who to the model of his own pure heart  
Shaped his belief, as grace divine inspired,  
And human reason dictated with awe.

—And surely never did there live on earth  
A man of kindlier nature. The rough  
sports 415

And teasing ways of children vexed not  
him ;

Indulgent listener was he to the tongue  
Of garrulous age ; nor did the sick man's  
tale,

To his fraternal sympathy addressed,  
Obtain reluctant hearing.

Plain his garb ; 420

Such as might suit a rustic Sire, prepared  
For sabbath duties ; yet he was a man  
Whom no one could have passed without  
remark.

Active and nervous was his gait ; his  
limbs

And his whole figure breathed intelli-  
gence. 425

Time had compressed the freshness of his  
cheek

Into a narrower circle of deep red,  
But had not tamed his eye ; that, under  
brows

Shaggy and grey, had meanings which it  
brought

From years of youth ; which, like a Being  
made 430

Of many Beings, he had wondrous skill  
To blend with knowledge of the years to  
come,

Human, or such as lie beyond the grave.

---

So was He framed ; and such his course  
of life 434

Who now, with no appendage but a staff,  
The prized memorial of relinquished toils,  
Upon that cottage-bench reposed his  
limbs,

Screened from the sun. Supine the Wan-  
derer lay,

His eyes as if in drowsiness half shut,  
The shadows of the breezy elms above  
Dappling his face. He had not heard the  
sound 441

Of my approaching steps, and in the shade  
Unnoticed did I stand some minutes'  
space.

At length I hailed him, seeing that his  
hat

Was moist with water-drops, as if the  
brim 445

Had newly scooped a running stream. He  
rose,

And ere our lively greeting into peace  
Had settled, "'Tis," said I, "a burning  
day :

My lips are parched with thirst, but you,  
it seems,

Have somewhere found relief." He, at  
the word, 450

Pointing towards a sweet-briar, bade me climb  
 The fence where that aspiring shrub looked out  
 Upon the public way. It was a plot  
 Of garden ground run wild, its matted weeds  
 Marked with the steps of those, whom,  
 as they passed, 455  
 The gooseberry trees that shot in long  
 lank slips,  
 Or currants, hanging from their leafless  
 stems,  
 In scanty strings, had tempted to o'erleap  
 The broken wall. I looked around, and  
 there,  
 Where two tall hedge-rows of thick alder  
 boughs 460  
 Joined in a cold damp nook, espied a  
 well  
 Shrouded with willow-flowers and plummy  
 fern.  
 My thirst I slaked, and, from the cheer-  
 less spot  
 Withdrawing, straightway to the shade,  
 returned  
 Where sate the old Man on the cottage-  
 bench; 465  
 And, while, beside him, with uncovered  
 head,  
 I yet was standing, freely to respire,  
 And cool my temples in the fanning air,  
 Thus did he speak. "I see around me  
 here  
 Things which you cannot see: we die, my  
 Friend, 470  
 Nor we alone, but that which each man  
 loved  
 And prized in his peculiar nook of earth  
 Dies with him, or is changed; and very  
 soon  
 Even of the good is no memorial left. 474  
 —The Poets, in their elegies and songs  
 Lamenting the departed, call the groves,  
 They call upon the hills and streams to  
 mourn,  
 And senseless rocks; nor idly; for they  
 speak,  
 In these their invocations, with a voice  
 Obedient to the strong creative power 480  
 Of human passion. Sympathies there are

More tranquil, yet perhaps of kindred  
 birth,  
 That steal upon the meditative mind,  
 And grow with thought. Beside yon  
 spring I stood,  
 And eyed its waters till we seemed to feel  
 One sadness, they and I. For them a  
 bond 486  
 Of brotherhood is broken: time has been  
 When, every day, the touch of human  
 hand  
 Dislodged the natural sleep that binds  
 them up  
 In mortal stillness; and they ministered  
 To human comfort. Stooping down to  
 drink, 491  
 Upon the slimy foot-stone I espied  
 The useless fragment of a wooden bowl,  
 Green with the moss of years, and subject  
 only  
 To the soft handling of the elements: 495  
 There let it lie—how foolish are such  
 thoughts!  
 Forgive them;—never—never did my  
 steps  
 Approach this door but she who dwelt  
 within  
 A daughter's welcome gave me, and I  
 loved her  
 As my own child. Oh, Sir! the good die  
 first, 500  
 And they whose hearts are dry as summer  
 dust  
 Burn to the socket. Many a passenger  
 Hath blessed poor Margaret for her gen-  
 tle looks,  
 When she upheld the cool refreshment  
 drawn  
 From that forsaken spring; and no one  
 came 505  
 But he was welcome; no one went away  
 But that it seemed she loved him. She is  
 dead,  
 The light extinguished of her lonely hut,  
 The hut itself abandoned to decay,  
 And she forgotten in the quiet grave. 510

"I speak," continued he, "of One whose  
 stock  
 Of virtues bloomed beneath this lowly  
 roof.

She was a Woman of a steady mind,  
Tender and deep in her excess of love;  
Not speaking much, pleased rather with  
the joy 515

Of her own thoughts: by some especial  
care

Her temper had been framed, as if to  
make

A Being, who by adding love to peace  
Might live on earth a life of happiness.

Her wedded Partner lacked not on his  
side 520

The humble worth that satisfied her  
heart:

Frugal, affectionate, sober, and withal  
Keenly industrious. She with pride would  
tell

That he was often seated at his loom, 524  
In summer, ere the mower was abroad

Among the dewy grass,—in early spring,  
Ere the last star had vanished.—They  
who passed

At evening, from behind the garden fence  
Might hear his busy spade, which he  
would ply,

After his daily work, until the light 530  
Had failed, and every leaf and flower  
were lost

In the dark hedges. So their days were  
spent

In peace and comfort; and a pretty boy  
Was their best hope, next to the God in  
heaven.

“Not twenty years ago, but you I think  
Can scarcely bear it now in mind, there  
came 536

Two blighting seasons, when the fields  
were left

With half a harvest. It pleased Heaven  
to add

A worse affliction in the plague of war:  
This happy Land was stricken to the  
heart! 540

A Wanderer then among the cottages,  
I, with my freight of winter raiment,  
saw

The hardships of that season: many rich  
Sank down, as in a dream, among the  
poor;

And of the poor did many cease to be,

And their place knew them not. Mean-  
while, abridged 546

Of daily comforts, gladly reconciled  
To numerous self-denials, Margaret  
Went struggling on through those cala-  
mitous years

With cheerful hope, until the second  
autumn, 550

When her life's Helpmate on a sick-bed  
lay,

Smitten with perilous fever. In disease  
He lingered long; and, when his strength  
returned,

He found the little he had stored, to meet  
The hour of accident or crippling age, 555

Was all consumed. A second infant now  
Was added to the troubles of a time

Laden, for them and all of their degree,  
With care and sorrow: shoals of artisans

From ill-requited labour turned adrift 560  
Sought daily bread from public charity,

They, and their wives and children—hap-  
pier far

Could they have lived as do the little  
birds

That peck along the hedge-rows, or the  
kite

That makes her dwelling on the moun-  
tain rocks! 565

“A sad reverse it was for him who long  
Had filled with plenty, and possessed in  
peace,

This lonely Cottage. At the door he stood,  
And whistled many a snatch of merry  
tunes

That had no mirth in them; or with his  
knife 570

Carved uncouth figures on the heads of  
sticks—

Then, not less idly, sought, through every  
nook

In house or garden, any casual work  
Of use or ornament; and with a strange,

Amusing, yet uneasy, novelty, 575  
He mingled, where he might, the various  
tasks

Of summer, autumn, winter, and of  
spring.

But this endured not; his good humour  
soon

Became a weight in which no pleasure  
was:

And poverty brought on a petted mood  
And a sore temper: day by day he  
drooped, 581

And he would leave his work—and to the  
town

Would turn without an errand his slack  
steps;

Or wander here and there among the  
fields.

One while he would speak lightly of his  
babes, 585

And with a cruel tongue: at other times  
He tossed them with a false unnatural  
joy:

And 'twas a rueful thing to see the looks  
Of the poor innocent children. 'Every  
smile,'

Said Margaret to me, here beneath these  
trees, 590

'Made my heart bleed.'

At this the Wanderer paused;  
And, looking up to those enormous elms,  
He said, "'Tis now the hour of deepest  
noon.

At this still season of repose and peace,  
This hour when all things which are not  
at rest 595

Are cheerful; while this multitude of flies  
With tuneful hum is filling all the air;  
Why should a tear be on an old Man's  
cheek?

Why should we thus, with an untoward  
mind,

And in the weakness of humanity, 600  
From natural wisdom turn our hearts  
away;

To natural comfort shut our eyes and  
ears; •

And, feeding on disquiet, thus disturb  
The calm of nature with our restless  
thoughts?"

He spake with somewhat of a solemn  
tone: 605

But, when he ended, there was in his face  
Such easy cheerfulness, a look so mild,  
That for a little time it stole away  
All recollection; and that simple tale

Passed from my mind like a forgotten  
sound. 610

A while on trivial things we held dis-  
course,

To me soon tasteless. In my own despite,  
I thought of that poor Woman as of one  
Whom I had known and loved. He had  
rehearsed 614

Her homely tale with such familiar power,  
With such an active countenance, an eye  
So busy, that the things of which he  
spake

Seemed present; and, attention now  
relaxed,

A heart-felt chilliness crept along my  
veins.

I rose; and, having left the breezy shade,  
Stood drinking comfort from the warmer  
sun, 621

That had not cheered me long—ere, look-  
ing round

Upon that tranquil Ruin, I returned,  
And begged of the old Man that, for my  
sake,

He would resume his story.

He replied, 625

"It were a wantonness, and would de-  
mand

Severe reproof, if we were men whose  
hearts

Could hold vain dalliance with the misery  
Even of the dead; contented thence to  
draw

A momentary pleasure, never marked  
By reason, barren of all future good. 631

But we have known that there is often  
found

In mournful thoughts, and always might  
be found,

A power to virtue friendly; were't not so,  
I am a dreamer among men, indeed 635

An idle dreamer! 'Tis a common tale,  
An ordinary sorrow of man's life,

A tale of silent suffering, hardly clothed  
In bodily form.—But without further

bidding

I will proceed.

While thus it fared with them,  
To whom this cottage, till those hapless

years, 641

Had been a blessèd home, it was my  
chance

To travel in a country far remote;  
And when these lofty elms once more  
appeared

What pleasant expectations lured me on  
O'er the flat Common!—With quick step  
I reached 646

The threshold, lifted with light hand the  
latch;

But, when I entered, Margaret looked at  
me

A little while; then turned her head  
away

Speechless,—and, sitting down upon a  
chair, 650

Wept bitterly. I wist not what to do,  
Nor how to speak to her. Poor Wretch!  
at last

She rose from off her seat, and then,—  
O Sir!

I cannot *tell* how she pronounced my  
name:—

With fervent love, and with a face of  
grief 655

Unutterably helpless, and a look  
That seemed to cling upon me, she  
enquired

If I had seen her husband. As she spake  
A strange surprise and fear came to my  
heart,

Nor had I power to answer ere she told  
That he had disappeared—not two months  
gone. 661

He left his house: two wretched days  
had past,

And on the third, as wistfully she raised  
Her head from off her pillow, to look  
forth, 664

Like one in trouble, for returning light,  
Within her chamber-casement she espied  
A folded paper, lying as if placed  
To meet her waking eyes. This trem-  
blingly

She opened—found no writing, but be-  
held

Pieces of money carefully enclosed, 670  
Silver and gold. 'I shuddered at the  
sight,'

Said Margaret, 'for I knew it was his  
hand

That must have placed it there; and ere  
that day

Was ended, that long anxious day, I  
learned,

From one who by my husband had been  
sent 675

With the sad news, that he had joined  
a troop

Of soldiers, going to a distant land.

—He left me thus—he could not gather  
heart

To take a farewell of me; for he feared  
That I should follow with my babes, and  
sink 680

Beneath the misery of that wandering  
life.'

"This tale did Margaret tell with many  
tears:

And, when she ended, I had little power  
To give her comfort, and was glad to take  
Such words of hope from her own mouth  
as served 685

To cheer us both. But long we had not  
talked

Ere we built up a pile of better thoughts,  
And with a brighter eye she looked around  
As if she had been shedding tears of joy.

We parted.—'Twas the time of early  
spring; 690

I left her busy with her garden tools;  
And well remember, o'er that fence she  
looked,

And, while I paced along the foot-way  
path,

Called out, and sent a blessing after me,  
With tender cheerfulness, and with a  
voice 695

That seemed the very sound of happy  
thoughts.

"I roved o'er many a hill and many  
a dale,

With my accustomed load; in heat and  
cold,

Through many a wood and many an open  
ground,

In sunshine and in shade, in wet and fair,  
Drooping or blithe of heart, as might  
befall; 701

My best companions now the driving  
winds,

And now the 'trotting brooks' and whispering trees,

And now the music of my own sad steps,  
With many a short-lived thought that  
passed between, 705

And disappeared.

I journeyed back this way,  
When, in the warmth of midsummer, the  
wheat

Was yellow; and the soft and bladed  
grass,

Springing afresh, had o'er the hay-field  
spread

Its tender verdure. At the door arrived,  
I found that she was absent. In the  
shade, 711

Where now we sit, I waited her return.

Her cottage, then a cheerful object, wore  
Its customary look,—only, it seemed,

The honeysuckle, crowding round the  
porch, 715

Hung down in heavier tufts; and that  
bright weed,

The yellow stone-crop, suffered to take  
root

Along the window's edge, profusely grew  
Blinding the lower panes. I turned  
aside,

And strolled into her garden. It appeared  
720

To lag behind the season, and had lost  
Its pride of neatness. Daisy-flowers and  
thrift

Had broken their trim border-lines, and  
straggled

O'er paths they used to deck: carnations,  
once 724

Prized for surpassing beauty, and no less  
For the peculiar pains they had required,  
Declined their languid heads, wanting  
support.

The cumbrous bind-weed, with its wreaths  
and bells,

Had twined about her two small rows of  
peas,

And dragged them to the earth.

Ere this an hour  
Was wasted.—Back I turned my restless  
steps; 731

A stranger passed; and, guessing whom  
I sought,

He said that she was used to ramble far.—  
The sun was sinking in the west; and now

I sate with sad impatience. From within  
Her solitary infant cried aloud; 736

Then, like a blast that dies away self-  
stilled,

The voice was silent. From the bench  
I rose;

But neither could divert nor soothe my  
thoughts. 739

The spot, though fair, was very desolate—  
The longer I remained, more desolate:

And, looking round me, now I first  
observed

The corner stones, on either side the  
porch,

With dull red stains discoloured, and  
stuck o'er

With tufts and hairs of wool, as if the  
sheep, 745

That fed upon the Common, thither came  
Familiarly, and found a couching-place

Even at her threshold. Deeper shadows  
fell

From these tall elms; the cottage-clock  
struck eight;—

I turned, and saw her distant a few steps.  
Her face was pale and thin—her figure,

too, 751

Was changed. As she unlocked the door,  
she said,

'It grieves me you have waited here so  
long,

But, in good truth, I've wandered much  
of late;

And, sometimes—to my shame I speak—  
have need 755

Of my best prayers to bring me back  
again.'

While on the board she spread our evening  
meal,

She told me—interrupting not the work  
Which gave employment to her listless  
hands—

That she had parted with her elder child;  
To a kind master on a distant farm 761

Now happily apprenticed.—'I perceive  
You look at me, and you have cause;

to-day  
I have been travelling far; and many  
days

About the fields I wander, knowing  
this 765

Only, that what I seek I cannot find;

And so I waste my time: for I am  
changed;

And to myself,' said she, 'have done  
much wrong

And to this helpless infant. I have slept  
Weeping, and weeping have I waked; my  
tears 770

Have flowed as if my body were not such  
As others are; and I could never die.

But I am now in mind and in my heart  
More easy; and I hope,' said she, 'that  
God

Will give me patience to endure the  
things 775

Which I behold at home.'

It would have grieved

Your very soul to see her. Sir, I feel

The story linger in my heart; I fear

'Tis long and tedious; but my spirit  
clings

To that poor Woman:—so familiarly 780

Do I perceive her manner, and her look,  
And presence; and so deeply do I feel

Her goodness, that, not seldom, in my  
walks

A momentary trance comes over me; 784

And to myself I seem to muse on One

By sorrow laid asleep; or borne away,

A human being destined to awake

To human life, or something very near

To human life, when he shall come again  
For whom she suffered. Yes, it would

have grieved 790

Your very soul to see her: evermore

Her eyelids drooped, her eyes downward  
were cast;

And, when she at her table gave me food,  
She did not look at me. Her voice was  
low, 794

Her body was subdued. In every act  
Pertaining to her house-affairs, appeared

The careless stillness of a thinking mind  
Self-occupied; to which all outward  
things

Are like an idle matter. Still she sighed,  
But yet no motion of the breast was seen,

No heaving of the heart. While by the  
fire 801

We sate together, sighs came on my ear,  
I knew not how, and hardly whence they  
came.

"Ere my departure, to her care I gave,  
For her son's use, some tokens of regard,  
Which with a look of welcome she re-  
ceived; 806

And I exhorted her to place her trust  
In God's good love, and seek his help by  
prayer.

I took my staff, and, when I kissed her  
babe,

The tears stood in her eyes. I left her  
then a 810

With the best hope and comfort. I could  
give:

She thanked me for my wish;—but for my  
hope

It seemed she did not thank me.

I returned,

And took my rounds along this road again  
When on its sunny bank the primrose  
flower 815

Peeped forth, to give an earnest of the  
Spring.

I found her sad and drooping: she had  
learned

No tidings of her husband; if he lived,

She knew not that he lived; if he were  
dead,

She knew not he was dead. She seemed  
the same 820

In person and appearance; but her house  
Bespake a sleepy hand of negligence;

The floor was neither dry nor neat, the  
hearth

Was comfortless, and her small lot of  
books,

Which, in the cottage-window, heretofore  
Had been piled up against the corner  
panes 826

In seemly order, now, with straggling  
leaves

Lay scattered here and there, open or shut,  
As they had chanced to fall. Her infant  
Babe

Had from its mother caught the trick of  
grief, 830

And sighed among its playthings. I  
withdrew,

And once again entering the garden saw,  
More plainly still, that poverty and grief  
Were now come nearer to her: weeds  
defaced

The hardened soil, and knots of withered  
grass: 835

No ridges there appeared of clear black  
mould,

No winter greenness; of her herbs and  
flowers,

It seemed the better part were gnawed  
away

Or trampled into earth; a chain of straw,  
Which had been twined about the slender  
stem 840

Of a young apple-tree, lay at its root;  
The bark was nibbled round by truant  
sheep.

—Margaret stood near, her infant in her  
arms,

And, noting that my eye was on the tree,  
She said, 'I fear it will be dead and gone  
Ere Robert come again.' When to the  
House 846

We had returned together, she enquired  
If I had any hope:—but for her babe  
And for her little orphan boy, she said,  
She had no wish to live, that she must die  
Of sorrow. Yet I saw the idle loom 851  
Still in its place; his Sunday garments  
hung

Upon the self-same nail; his very staff  
Stood undisturbed behind the door.

And when,  
In bleak December, I retraced this way,  
She told me that her little babe was dead,  
And she was left alone. She now, released  
From her maternal cares, had taken up  
The employment common through these  
wilds, and gained,

By spinning hemp, a pittance for herself;  
And for this end had hired a neighbour's  
boy 861

To give her needful help. That very time  
Most willingly she put her work aside,  
And walked with me along the miry road,  
Heedless how far; and, in such piteous  
sort 865

That any heart had ached to hear her,  
begged

That, wheresoe'er I went, I still would ask

For him whom she had lost. We parted  
then—

Our final parting; for from that time  
forth

Did many seasons pass ere I returned 870  
Into this tract again.

Nine tedious years;  
From their first separation, nine long  
years,

She lingered in unquiet widowhood;  
A Wife and Widow. Needs must it have  
been

A sore heart-wasting! I have heard, my  
Friend, 875

That in yon arbour oftentimes she sate  
Alone, through half the vacant sabbath  
day;

And, if a dog passed by, she still would  
quit

The shade, and look abroad. On this old  
bench 879

For hours she sate; and evermore her eye  
Was busy in the distance, shaping things  
That made her heart beat quick. You  
see that path,

Now faint,—the grass has crept o'er its  
grey line;

There, to and fro, she paced through  
many a day

Of the warm summer, from a belt of hemp  
That girt her waist, spinning the long-  
drawn thread 886

With backward steps. Yet ever as there  
passed

A man whose garments showed the sol-  
dier's red,

Or crippled mendicant in soldier's garb,  
The little child who sate to turn the wheel  
Ceased from his task; and she with fal-  
tering voice 891

Made many a fond enquiry; and when  
they,

Whose presence gave no comfort, were  
gone by,

Her heart was still more sad. And by  
yon gate,

That bars the traveller's road, she often  
stood, 895

And when a stranger horseman came, the  
latch

Would lift, and in his face look wistfully:

Most happy, if, from aught discovered  
 there  
 Of tender feeling, she might dare repeat  
 The same sad question. Meanwhile her  
 poor Hut 900  
 Sank to decay; for he was gone, whose  
 hand,  
 At the first nipping of October frost,  
 Closed up each chink, and with fresh  
 bands of straw  
 Chequered the green-grown thatch. And  
 so she lived  
 Through the long winter, reckless and  
 alone; 905  
 Until her house by frost, and thaw, and  
 rain,  
 Was sapped; and while she slept, the  
 nightly damps  
 Did chill her breast; and in the stormy  
 day  
 Her tattered clothes were ruffled by the  
 wind,  
 Even at the side of her own fire. Yet  
 still 910  
 She loved this wretched spot, nor would  
 for worlds  
 Have parted hence; and still that length  
 of road,  
 And this rude bench, one torturing hope  
 endeared,  
 Fast rooted at her heart: and here, my  
 Friend,—  
 In sickness she remained; and here she  
 died; 915  
 Last human tenant of these ruined walls!"

The old Man ceased: he saw that I was  
 moved;  
 From that low bench, rising instinctively  
 I turned aside in weakness, nor had  
 power  
 To thank him for the tale which he had  
 told. 920  
 I stood, and leaning o'er the garden wall  
 Reviewed that Woman's sufferings; and  
 it seemed  
 To comfort me while with a brother's  
 love  
 I blessed her in the impotence of grief.  
 Then towards the cottage I returned; and  
 traced 925

Fondly, though with an interest more  
 mild,  
 That secret spirit of humanity  
 Which, 'mid the calm oblivious tender-  
 cies  
 Of nature, 'mid her plants, and weeds,  
 and flowers,  
 And silent overgrowings, still survived.  
 The old Man, noting this, resumed, and  
 said, 931  
 "My Friend! enough to sorrow you have  
 given,  
 The purposes of wisdom ask no more:  
 Nor more would she have craved as due  
 to One  
 Who, in her worst distress, had ofttimes  
 felt 935  
 The unbounded might of prayer; and  
 learned, with soul  
 Fixed on the Cross, that consolation  
 springs,  
 From sources deeper far than deepest  
 pain,  
 For the meek Sufferer. Why then should  
 we read  
 The forms of things with an unworthy  
 eye? 940  
 She sleeps in the calm earth, and peace is  
 here.  
 I well remember that those very plumes,  
 Those weeds, and the high spear-grass on  
 that wall,  
 By mist and silent rain-drops silvered o'er,  
 As once I passed, into my heart conveyed  
 So still an image of tranquillity, 946  
 So calm and still, and looked so beautiful  
 Amid the uneasy thoughts which filled  
 my mind,  
 That what we feel of sorrow and despair  
 From ruin and from change, and all the  
 grief 950  
 That passing shows of Being leave be-  
 hind,  
 Appeared an idle dream, that could main-  
 tain,  
 Nowhere, dominion o'er the enlightened  
 spirit  
 Whose meditative sympathies repose  
 Upon the breast of Faith. I turned  
 away, 955  
 And walked along my road in happiness."

|  |  |
|--|--|
| He ceased. Ere long the sun declining<br>shot  | At distance heard, peopled the milder air.   |
| A slant and mellow radiance, which began<br>To fall upon us, while, beneath the trees, | The old Man rose, and, with a sprightly<br>mien <span style="float:right">965</span> |
| We sate on that low bench: and now we<br>felt, <span style="float:right">960</span>    | Of hopeful preparation, grasped his staff;<br>Together casting then a farewell look  |
| Admired thus, the sweet hour coming<br>on.   | Upon those silent walls, we left the<br>shade;                                       |
| A linnet warbled from those lofty elms,  | And, ere the stars were visible, had<br>reached <span style="float:right">969</span> |
| A thrush sang loud, and other melodies,  | A village-inn,—our evening resting-place.  |

## BOOK SECOND.

### THE SOLITARY.

#### ARGUMENT.

The Author describes his travels with the Wanderer, whose character is further illustrated.—Morning scene, and view of a Village Wake.—Wanderer's account of a Friend whom he purposes to visit.—View, from an eminence, of the Valley which his Friend had chosen for his retreat.—Sound of singing from below.—A funeral procession.—Descent into the Valley.—Observations drawn from the Wanderer at sight of a book accidentally discovered in a recess in the Valley.—Meeting with the Wanderer's friend, the Solitary.—Wanderer's description of the mode of burial in this mountainous district.—Solitary contrasts with this, that of the individual carried a few minutes before from the cottage.—The cottage entered.—Description of the Solitary's apartment.—Repast there.—View, from the window, of two mountain summits; and the Solitary's description of the companionship they afford him.—Account of the departed inmate of the cottage.—Description of a grand spectacle upon the mountains, with its effect upon the Solitary's mind.—Leave the house.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| In days of yore how fortunately fared<br>The Minstrel! wandering on from hall to<br>hall,   | He walked—protected from the sword of<br>war   |
| Baronial court or royal; cheered with<br>gifts  | By virtue of that sacred instrument<br>His harp, suspended at the traveller's<br>side; <span style="float:right">15</span> |
| Munificent, and love, and ladies' praise;<br>Now meeting on his road an armed<br>knight, <span style="float:right">5</span>                             | His dear companion wheresoe'er he went<br>Opening from land to land an easy way<br>By melody, and by the charm of verse.   |
| Now resting with a pilgrim by the side<br>Of a clear brook;—beneath an abbey's<br>roof  | Yet not the noblest of that honoured<br>Race   |
| One evening sumptuously lodged; the<br>next,  | Drew happier, loftier, more impassioned,<br>thoughts <span style="float:right">20</span>                                   |
| Humbly in a religious hospital;<br>Or with some merry outlaws of the wood;<br>Or haply shrouded in a hermit's cell. <span style="float:right">11</span> | From his long journeyings and eventful<br>life,  |
| Him, sleeping or awake, the robber<br>spared;   | Than this obscure Itinerant had skill<br>To gather, ranging through the tamer<br>ground                                    |
|   | Of these our unimaginative days;   |

Both while he trod the earth in humblest  
guise 25  
Accoutred with his burthen and his staff;  
And now, when free to move with lighter  
pace.

What wonder, then, if I, whose favourite  
school  
Hath been the fields, the roads, and rural  
lanes,  
Looked on this guide with reverential  
love? 30

Each with the other pleased, we now  
pursued

Our journey, under favourable skies.  
Turn wheresoe'er we would, he was a  
light

Unfailing: not a hamlet could we pass,  
Rarely a house, that did not yield to him  
Remembrances; or from his tongue call  
forth 36

Some way-beguiling tale. Nor less regard  
Accompanied those strains of apt dis-  
course,

Which nature's various objects might  
inspire;

And in the silence of his face I read 40  
His overflowing spirit. Birds and beasts,  
And the mute fish that glances in the  
stream,

And harmless reptile coiling in the sun,  
And gorgeous insect hovering in the air,  
The fowl domestic, and the household  
dog— 45

In his capacious mind, he loved them all:  
Their rights acknowledging he felt for  
all.

Oft was occasion given me to perceive  
How the calm pleasures of the pasturing  
herd

To happy contemplation soothed his  
walk; 50

How the poor brute's condition, forced to  
run

Its course of suffering in the public road,  
Sad contrast! all too often smote his heart  
With unavailing pity. Rich in love  
And sweet humanity, he was, himself, 55  
To the degree that he desired, beloved.  
Smiles of good-will from faces that he  
knew

Greeted us all day long; we took our  
seats

By many a cottage-hearth, where he re-  
ceived

The welcome of an Inmate from afar, 60  
And I at once forgot I was a Stranger.

—Nor was he loth to enter ragged huts,  
Huts where his charity was blest; his  
voice

Heard as the voice of an experienced  
friend.

And, sometimes—where the poor man  
held dispute 65

With his own mind, unable to subdue  
Impatience through inaptness to perceive  
General distress in his particular lot;  
Or cherishing resentment, or in vain  
Struggling against it; with a soul per-  
plexed, 70

And finding in herself no steady power  
To draw the line of comfort that divides  
Calamity, the chastisement of Heaven,  
From the injustice of our brother men—  
To him appeal was made as to a judge;  
Who, with an understanding heart, al-  
layed 76

The perturbation; listened to the plea;  
Resolved the dubious point; and sentence  
gave

So grounded, so applied, that it was heard  
With softened spirit, even when it con-  
demned. 80

Such intercourse I witnessed, while we  
roved,

Now as his choice directed, now as mine;  
Or both, with equal readiness of will,  
Our course submitting to the changeful  
breeze

Of accident. But when the rising sun 85  
Had three times called us to renew our  
walk,

My Fellow-traveller, with earnest voice,  
As if the thought were but a moment old,  
Claimed absolute dominion for the day.

We started—and he led me toward the  
hills, 90

Up through an ample vale, with higher  
hills

Before us, mountains stern and desolate;  
But, in the majesty of distance, now

Set off, and to our ken appearing fair  
Of aspect, with aerial softness clad, 95  
And beautified with morning's purple  
beams.

The wealthy, the luxurious, by the stress  
Of business roused, or pleasure, ere their  
time,

May roll in chariots, or provoke the hoofs  
Of the fleet coursers they bestride, to raise  
From earth the dust of morning, slow to  
rise; 101

And they, if blest with health and hearts  
at ease,

Shall lack not their enjoyment:—but how  
faint

Compared with ours! who, pacing side  
by side,

Could, with an eye of leisure, look on all  
That we beheld; and lend the listening  
sense 106

To every grateful sound of earth and air;  
Pausing at will—our spirits braced, our  
thoughts

Pleasant as roses in the thickets blown,  
And pure as dew bathing their crimson  
leaves. 110

Mount slowly, sun! that we may journey  
long,

By this dark hill protected from thy  
beams!

Such is the summer pilgrim's frequent  
wish;

But quickly from among our morning  
thoughts

'Twas chased away: for, toward the  
western side 115

Of the broad vale, casting a casual glance,  
We saw a throng of people;—wherefore  
met?

Blithe notes of music, suddenly let loose  
On the thrilled ear, and flags uprising,  
yield

Prompt answer; they proclaim the annual  
Wake, 120

Which the bright season favours.—Tabor  
and pipe

In purpose join to hasten or reprove  
The laggard Rustic; and repay with  
boons

Of merriment a party-coloured knot, 124  
Already formed upon the village-green.

—Beyond the limits of the shadow cast  
By the broad hill, glistened upon our  
sight

That gay assemblage. Round them and  
above,

Glitter, with dark recesses interposed,  
Casement, and cottage-roof, and stems of  
trees 130

Half-veiled in vapoury cloud, the silver  
steam

Of dews fast melting on their leafy boughs  
By the strong sunbeams smitten. Like  
a mast

Of gold, the Maypole shines; as if the  
rays

Of morning, aided by exhaling dew, 135  
With gladsome influence could re-animate  
The faded garlands dangling from its  
sides.

Said I, "The music and the sprightly  
scene

Invite us; shall we quit our road, and  
join

These festive matins?"—He replied, "Not  
loth 140

To linger I would here with you partake,  
Not one hour merely, but till evening's  
close,

The simple pastimes of the day and place.  
By the fleet Racers, ere the sun be set,

The turf of yon large pasture will be  
skimmed; 145

There, too, the lusty Wrestlers shall con-  
tend:

But know we not that he, who intermits  
The appointed task and duties of the day,  
Untunes full oft the pleasures of the day;  
Checking the finer spirits that refuse 150  
To flow, when purposes are lightly  
changed?

A length of journey yet remains un-  
traced:

Let us proceed." Then, pointing with his  
staff

Raised toward those craggy summits, his  
intent

He thus imparted:—

♦ "In a spot that lies 155

Among yon mountain fastnesses concealed,

You will receive, before the hour of noon,  
Good recompense, I hope, for this day's toil,

From sight of One who lives secluded there,

Lonesome and lost: of whom, and whose past life, 160

(Not to forestall such knowledge as may be

More faithfully collected from himself)

This brief communication shall suffice.

"Though now sojourning there, he, like myself, 164

Sprang from a stock of lowly parentage

Among the wilds of Scotland, in a tract  
Where many a sheltered and well-tended plant

Bears, on the humblest ground of social life,  
Blossoms of piety and innocence.

Such grateful promises his youth displayed: 170

And, having shown in study forward zeal,

He to the Ministry was duly called;  
And straight, incited by a curious mind  
Filled with vague hopes, he undertook  
the charge

Of Chaplain to a military troop 175  
Cheered by the Highland bagpipe, as they marched

In plaided vest,—his fellow-countrymen.  
This office filling, yet by native power

And force of native inclination made  
An intellectual ruler in the haunts 180

Of social vanity, he walked the world,  
Gay, and affecting graceful gaiety;

Lax, buoyant—less a pastor with his flock  
Than a soldier among soldiers—lived and

roamed

Where Fortune led:—and Fortune, who  
oft proves 185

The careless wanderer's friend, to him  
made known

A blooming Lady—a conspicuous flower,  
Admired for beauty, for her sweetness  
praised;

Whom he had sensibility to love,  
Ambition to attempt, and skill to win. 190

"For this fair Bride, most rich in gifts  
of mind,

Nor sparingly endowed with worldly  
wealth,

His office he relinquished; and retired  
From the world's notice to a rural home.

Youth's season yet with him was scarcely  
past, 195

And she was in youth's prime. How free  
their love,

How full their joy! Till, pitiable doom!  
In the short course of one undreaded

year,  
Death blasted all. Death suddenly o'er-

threw "

Two lovely Children—all that they  
possessed! 200

The Mother followed:—miserably bare  
The one Survivor stood; he wept, he

prayed  
For his dismissal, day and night, com-

pelled  
To hold communion with the grave, and

face  
With pain the regions of eternity. 205

An uncomplaining apathy displaced  
This anguish; and, indifferent to delight,

To aim and purpose, he consumed his  
days,

To private interest dead, and public care.  
So lived he; so he might have died.

But now,  
To the wide world's astonishment, ap-

peared 211  
A glorious opening, the unlooked-for

dawn,  
That promised everlasting joy to France!

Her voice of social transport reached even  
him!

He broke from his contracted bounds,  
repaired 215

To the great City, an emporium then  
Of golden expectations, and receiving

Freights every day from a new world of  
hope.

Thither his popular talents he trans-  
ferred;

And, from the pulpit, zealously main-  
tained 220

The cause of Christ and civil liberty,  
As one, and moving to one glorious end.

Intoxicating service ! I might say  
A happy service ; for he was sincere  
As vanity and fondness for applause, 225  
And new and shapeless wishes, would  
allow.

“That righteous cause (such power  
hath freedom) bound,  
For one hostility, in friendly league,  
Ethereal natures and the worst of slaves ;  
Was served by rival advocates that came  
From regions opposite as heaven and hell.  
One courage seemed to animate them all :  
And, from the dazzling conquests daily  
gained

By their united efforts, there arose  
A proud and most presumptuous con-  
fidence 235

In the transcendent wisdom of the age,  
And her discernment ; not alone in rights,  
And in the origin and bounds of power  
Social and temporal ; but in laws divine,  
Deduced by reason, or to faith revealed.  
An overweening trust was raised ; and  
fear 241

Cast out, alike of person and of thing.  
Plague from this union spread, whose  
subtle bane

The strongest did not easily escape ;  
And He, what wonder ! took a mortal  
taint. 245

How shall I trace the change, how bear  
to tell

That he broke faith with them whom he  
had laid

In earth's dark chambers, with a Chris-  
tian's hope !

An infidel contempt of holy writ  
Stole by degrees upon his mind ; and  
hence • 250

Life, like that Roman Janus, double-  
faced ;

Vilest hypocrisy—the laughing, gay  
Hypocrisy, not leagued with fear, but  
pride.

Smooth words he had to wheedle simple  
souls ;

But, for disciples of the inner school, 255  
Old freedom was old servitude, and they  
The wisest whose opinions stooped the  
least

To known restraints ; and who most  
boldly drew

Hopeful prognostications from a creed,  
That, in the light of false philosophy, 260  
Spread like a halo round a misty moon,  
Widening its circle as the storms ad-  
vance.

“His sacred function was at length  
renounced ;

And every day and every place enjoyed  
The unshackled layman's natural liberty ;  
Speech, manners, morals, all without dis-  
guise. 266

I do not wish to wrong him ; though the  
course

Of private life licentiously displayed  
Unhallowed actions—planted like a crown  
Upon the insolent aspiring brow 270  
Of spurious notions—worn as open signs  
Of prejudice subdued—still he retained,  
'Mid much abasement, what he had  
received

From nature, an intense and glowing  
mind.

Wherefore, when humbled Liberty grew  
weak, 275

And mortal sickness on her face appeared,  
He coloured objects to his own desire  
As with a lover's passion. Yet his moods  
Of pain were keen as those of better  
men,

Nay keener, as his fortitude was less ; 280  
And he continued, when worse days were  
come,

To deal about his sparkling eloquence,  
Struggling against the strange reverse,  
with zeal

That showed like happiness. But, in  
despite

Of all this outside bravery, within, 285  
He neither felt encouragement nor hope :  
For moral dignity, and strength of mind,  
Were wanting ; and simplicity of life ;  
And reverence for himself ; and, last and  
best,

Confiding thoughts, through love and fear  
of Him 290

Before whose sight the troubles of this  
world

Are vain, as billows in a tossing sea.

"The glory of the times fading away—  
 The splendour, which had given a festal  
 air  
 To self-importance, hallowed it, and  
 veiled 295  
 From his own sight—this gone, he forfeited  
 All joy in human nature; was consumed,  
 And vexed, and chafed, by levity and  
 scorn,  
 And fruitless indignation; galled by  
 pride;  
 Made desperate by contempt of men who  
 throve 300  
 Before his sight in power or fame, and  
 won,  
 Without desert, what he desired; weak  
 men,  
 Too weak even for his envy or his hate!  
 Tormented thus, after a wandering course  
 Of discontent, and inwardly opprest 305  
 With malady—in part, I fear, provoked  
 By weariness of life—he fixed his home,  
 Or, rather say, sate down by very chance,  
 Among these rugged hills; where now he  
 dwells,  
 And wastes the sad remainder of his  
 hours, 310  
 Steeped in a self-indulging spleen, that  
 wants not  
 Its own voluptuousness;—on this resolved,  
 With this content, that he will live and  
 die  
 Forgotten,—at safe distance from 'a  
 world  
 .Not moving to his mind.'"  
 These serious words

Closed the preparatory notices 316  
 That served my Fellow-traveller to beguile  
 The way, while we advanced up that  
 wide vale.  
 Diverging now (as if his quest had been  
 Some secret of the mountains, cavern,  
 fall 320  
 Of water, or some lofty eminence,  
 Renowned for splendid prospect far and  
 wide)  
 We scaled, without a track to ease our  
 steps,

A steep ascent; and reached a dreary  
 plain,  
 With a tumultuous waste of huge hill  
 tops 325  
 Before us; savage region! which I paced  
 Dispirited: when, all at once, behold!  
 Beneath our feet, a little lowly vale,  
 A lowly vale, and yet uplifted high  
 Among the mountains; even as if the  
 spot 330  
 Had been from eldest time by wish of  
 theirs  
 So placed, to be shut out from all the  
 world!  
 Urn-like it was in shape, deep as an urn;  
 With rocks encompassed, save that to the  
 south  
 Was one small opening, where a heath-  
 clad ridge 335  
 Supplied a boundary less abrupt and  
 close;  
 A quiet treeless nook, with two green  
 fields,  
 A liquid pool that glittered in the sun,  
 And one bare dwelling; one abode, no  
 more!  
 It seemed the home of poverty and toil,  
 Though not of want: the little fields,  
 made green 341  
 By husbandry of many thrifty years,  
 Paid cheerful tribute to the moorland  
 house.  
 —There crows the cock, single in his  
 domain:  
 The small birds find in spring no thicket  
 there 345  
 To shroud them; only from the neigh-  
 bouring vales  
 The cuckoo, straggling up to the hill tops,  
 Shouteth faint tidings of some gladder  
 place.

Ah! what a sweet Recess, thought I,  
 is here!  
 Instantly throwing down my limbs at  
 ease 350  
 Upon a bed of heath;—full many a spot  
 Of hidden beauty have I chanced to espy  
 Among the mountains; never one like  
 this;  
 So lonesome, and so perfectly secure;

Not melancholy—no, for it is green, 355  
And bright, and fertile, furnished in itself  
With the few needful things that life  
requires.

—In rugged arms how softly does it lie,  
How tenderly protected! Far and near  
We have an image of the pristine earth,  
The planet in its nakedness: were this 361  
Man's only dwelling, sole appointed seat,  
First, last, and single, in the breathing  
world,

It could not be more quiet: peace is here  
Or nowhere; days unruffled by the gale  
Of public news or private; years that  
pass 366

Forgetfully; uncalled upon to pay  
The common penalties of mortal life,  
Sickness, or accident, or grief, or pain.

On these and kindred thoughts intent

I lay 370  
In silence musing by my Comrade's side,  
He also silent; when from out the heart  
Of that profound abyss a solemn voice,  
Or several voices in one solemn sound,  
Was heard ascending; mournful, deep,  
and slow 375  
The cadence, as of psalms—a funeral  
dirge!

We listened, looking down upon the hut,  
But seeing no one: meanwhile from below  
The strain continued, spiritual as before;  
And now distinctly could I recognise 380  
These words:—“*Shall in the grave thy  
love be known,*

*In death thy faithfulness?*”—“God rest  
his soul!”

Said the old man, abruptly breaking  
silence,—

“He is departed, and finds peace at last!”

This scarcely spoken, and those holy  
strains 385  
Not ceasing, forth appeared in view a  
band

Of rustic persons, from behind the hut  
Bearing a coffin in the midst, with which  
They shaped their course along the  
sloping side

Of that small valley, singing as they  
moved; 390

A sober company and few, the men  
Bare-headed, and all decently attired!  
Some steps when they had thus advanced,  
the dirge

Ended; and, from the stillness that en-  
sued

Recovering, to my Friend I said, “You  
spake, 395

Methought, with apprehension that these  
rites

Are paid to Him upon whose shy retreat  
This day we purposed to intrude.”—“I  
did so,

But let us hence, that we may learn the  
truth:

Perhaps it is not he but some one else 400  
For whom this pious service is per-  
formed;

Some other tenant of the solitude.”

So, to a steep and difficult descent  
Trusting ourselves, we wound from crag  
to crag,

Where passage could be won; and, as the  
last 405

Of the mute train, behind the heathy top  
Of that off-sloping outlet, disappeared,  
I, more impatient in my downward  
course,

Had landed upon easy ground; and there  
Stood waiting for my Comrade. When  
behold 410

An object that enticed my steps aside!

A narrow, winding, entry opened out  
Into a platform—that lay, sheepfold-wise,  
Enclosed between an upright mass of rock  
And one old moss-grown wall;—a cool  
recess, 415

And fanciful! For where the rock and  
wall

Met in an angle, hung a penthouse,  
framed

By thrusting two rude staves into the  
wall

And overlaying them with mountain  
sods;

To weather-fend a little turf-built seat 420  
Whereon a full-grown man might rest,  
nor dread

The burning sunshine, or a transient  
shower;

But the whole plainly wrought by children's hands!  
 Whose skill had thronged the floor with a proud show  
 Of baby-houses, curiously arranged; 425  
 Nor wanting ornament of walks between,  
 With mimic trees inserted in the turf,  
 And gardens interposed. Pleased with the sight,  
 I could not choose but beckon to my Guide,  
 Who, entering, round him threw a careless glance 430  
 Impatient to pass on, when I exclaimed,  
 "Lo! what is here?" and, stooping down,  
 drew forth  
 A book, that, in the midst of stones and moss  
 And wreck of party-coloured earthenware,  
 Aptly disposed, had lent its help to raise  
 One of those petty structures. "His it must be!" 436  
 Exclaimed the Wanderer, "cannot but be his,  
 And he is gone!" The book, which in my hand  
 Had opened of itself (for it was swoln  
 With searching damp, and seemingly had lain 440  
 To the injurious elements exposed  
 From week to week,) I found to be a work  
 In the French tongue, a Novel of Voltaire,  
 His famous Optimist. "Unhappy Man!"  
 Exclaimed my Friend: "here then has been to him 445  
 Retreat within retreat, a sheltering-place  
 Within how deep a shelter! He had fits,  
 Even to the last, of genuine tenderness,  
 And loved the haunts of children; here, no doubt,  
 Pleasing and pleased, he shared their simple sports, 450  
 Or sate companionless; and here the book,  
 Left and forgotten in his careless way,  
 Must by the cottage-children have been found:  
 Heaven bless them, and their inconsiderate work!

To what odd purpose have the darlings turned 455  
 This sad memorial of their hapless friend!"

"Me," said I, "most doth it surprise, to find  
 Such book in such a place!"—"A book it is,"  
 He answered, "to the Person suited well,  
 Though little suited to surrounding things: 460  
 'Tis strange, I grant; and stranger still had been  
 To see the Man who owned it, dwelling here,"  
 With one poor shepherd, far from all the world!—  
 Now, if our errand hath been thrown away,  
 As from these intimations I forebode, 465  
 Grieved shall I be—less for my sake than yours,  
 And least of all for him who is no more."

By this, the book was in the old Man's hand;  
 And he continued, glancing on the leaves  
 An eye of scorn:—"The lover," said he, "doomed 470  
 To love when hope hath failed him—whom no depth  
 Of privacy is deep enough to hide,  
 Hath yet his bracelet or his lock of hair,  
 And that is joy to him. When change of times  
 Hath summoned kings to scaffolds, do but give 475  
 The faithful servant, who must hide his head  
 Henceforth in whatsoever nook he may,  
 A kerchief sprinkled with his master's blood,  
 And he too hath his comforter. How poor,  
 Beyond all poverty how destitute, 480  
 Must that Man have been left, who, hither driven,  
 Flying or seeking, could yet bring with him  
 No dearer relique, and no better stay,  
 Than this dull product of a scoffer's pen,

Impure conceits discharging from a heart  
 Hardened by impious pride!—I did not  
 fear 486

To tax you with this journey;”—mildly  
 said

My venerable Friend, as forth we stepped  
 Into the presence of the cheerful light—

“For I have knowledge that you do not  
 shrink 490

From moving spectacles;—but let us on.”

So speaking, on he went, and at the word  
 I followed, till he made a sudden stand:

For full in view, approaching through  
 a gate

That opened from the enclosure of green  
 fields 495

Into the rough uncultivated ground,  
 Behold the Man whom he had fancied  
 dead!

I knew from his deportment, mien, and  
 dress,

That it could be no other; a pale face,  
 A meagre person, tall, and in a garb 500

Not rustic—dull and faded like himself!  
 He saw us not, though distant but few  
 steps;

For he was busy, dealing, from a store  
 Upon a broad leaf carried, choicest strings

Of red ripe currants; gift by which he  
 strove, 505

With intermixture of endearing words,  
 To soothe a Child, who walked beside

him, weeping

As if disconsolate.—“They to the grave  
 Are bearing him, my Little-one,” he said,

“To the dark pit; but he will feel no  
 pain; 510

His body is at rest, his soul in heaven.”

More might have followed—but my  
 honoured Friend

Broke in upon the Speaker with a frank  
 And cordial greeting.—Vivid was the  
 light

That flashed and sparkled from the other's  
 eyes; 515

He was all fire: no shadow on his brow  
 Remained, nor sign of sickness on his face.

Hands joined he with his Visitant,—a  
 grasp,

An eager grasp; and many moments'  
 space—

When the first glow of pleasure was no  
 more, 520

And, of the sad appearance which at  
 once

Had vanished, much was come and com-  
 ing back—

An amicable smile retained the life  
 Which it had unexpectedly received,

Upon his hollow cheek. “How kind,”  
 he said, 525

“Nor could your coming have been better  
 timed;

For this, you see, is in our narrow world  
 A day of sorrow. I have here a charge”—

And, speaking thus, he patted tenderly  
 The sun-burnt forehead of the weeping

child— 530

“A little mourner, whom it is my task  
 To comfort;—but how came ye?—if you  
 track

(Which doth at once befriend us and  
 betray)

Conducted hither your most welcome  
 feet,

Ye could not miss the funeral train—  
 they yet 535

Have scarcely disappeared.” “This  
 blooming Child,”

Said the old Man, “is of an age to weep  
 At any grave or solemn spectacle,

Inly distressed or overpowered with awe,  
 He knows not wherefore;—but the boy

to-day, 540

Perhaps is shedding orphan's tears; you  
 also

Must have sustained a loss.”—“The hand  
 of Death,”

He answered, “has been here; but could  
 not well

Have fallen more lightly, if it had not  
 fallen

Upon myself.”—The other left these  
 words 545

Unnoticed, thus continuing.—

“From yon crag  
 Down whose steep sides we dropped into

the vale,

We heard the hymn they sang—a solemn  
 sound

Heard anywhere; but in a place like this  
'Tis more than human! Many precious  
rites 550

And customs of our rural ancestry  
Are gone, or stealing from us; this, I  
hope,

Will last for ever. Oft on my way have I  
Stood still, though but a casual passenger,  
So much I felt the awfulness of life, 555  
In that one moment when the corse is  
lifted

In silence, with a hush of decency;  
Then from the threshold moves with song  
of peace,

And confidential yearnings, tow'rd's its  
home,

Its final home on earth. What traveller—  
who— 560

(How far soe'er a stranger) does not own  
The bond of brotherhood, when he sees  
them go,

A mute procession on the houseless road;  
Or passing by some single tenement  
Or clustered dwellings, where again they  
raise 565

The monitory voice? But most of all  
It touches, it confirms, and elevates,  
Then, when the body, soon to be con-  
signed

Ashes to ashes, dust bequeathed to dust,  
Is raised from the church-aisle, and for-  
ward borne 570

Upon the shoulders of the next in love,  
The nearest in affection or in blood;  
Yea, by the very mourners who had  
knelt

Beside the coffin, resting on its lid  
In silent grief their unlifted heads, 575  
And heard meanwhile the Psalmist's  
mournful plaint,

And that most awful scripture which  
declares

We shall not sleep, but we shall all be  
changed!

—Have I not seen—ye likewise may have  
seen—

Son, husband, brothers—brothers side by  
side, 580

And son and father also side by side,  
Rise from that posture:—and in concert  
move.

On the green turf following the vested  
Priest,

Four dear supporters of one senseless  
weight,

From which they do not shrink, and  
under which 585

They faint not, but advance towards the  
open grave

Step after step—together, with their firm  
Unhidden faces: he that suffers most,

He outwardly, and inwardly perhaps,  
The most serene, with most undaunted  
eye!— 590

Oh! blest are they who live and die like  
these, "

Loved with such love, and with such  
sorrow mourned!"

"That poor Man taken hence to-day,"  
replied

The Solitary, with a faint sarcastic smile  
Which did not please me, "must be  
deemed, I fear, 595

Of the unblest; for he will surely sink  
Into his mother earth without such pomp  
Of grief, depart without occasion given  
By him for such array of fortitude.

Full seventy winters hath he lived, and  
mark! 600

This simple Child will mourn his one  
short hour,

And I shall miss him; scanty tribute!  
yet,

This wanting, he would leave the sight of  
men,

If love were his sole claim upon their  
care,

Like a ripe date which in the desert falls  
Without a hand to gather it."

At this  
I interposed, though loth to speak, and  
said,

"Can it be thus among so small a band  
As ye must needs be here? in such a  
place

I would not willingly, methinks, lose  
sight 610

Of a departing cloud."—"Twas not for  
love"—

Answered the sick Man with a careless  
voice—

"That I came hither; neither have I  
found

Among associates who have power of  
speech,

Nor in such other converse as is here, 615  
Temptation so prevailing as to change  
That mood, or undermine my first re-  
solve."

Then, speaking in like careless sort, he  
said

To my benign Companion,— "Pity 'tis  
That fortune did not guide you to this  
house 620

A few days earlier; then would you have  
seen

What stuff the Dwellers in a solitude,  
That seems by Nature hollowed out to be  
The seat and bosom of pure innocence,  
Are made of; an ungracious matter this!  
Which, for truth's sake, yet in remem-  
brance too 626

Of past discussions with this zealous  
friend

And advocate of humble life, I now  
Will force upon his notice; undeterred  
By the example of his own pure course,  
And that respect and deference which a  
soul 631

May fairly claim, by niggard age enriched  
In what she most doth value, love of God  
And his frail creature Man;—but ye  
shall hear.

I talk—and ye are standing in the sun  
Without refreshment!"

Quickly had he spoken,  
And, with light steps still quicker than  
his words,

Led toward the Cottage. Homely was  
the spot;

And, to my feeling, ere we reached the  
door,

Had almost a forbidding nakedness; 640  
Less fair, I grant, even painfully less  
fair,

Than it appeared when from the beetling  
rock

We had looked down upon it. All within,  
As left by the departed company,  
Was silent; save the solitary clock 645  
That on mine ear ticked with a mournful  
sound.—

Following our Guide, we clomb the  
cottage-stairs

And reached a small apartment dark and  
low,

Which was no sooner entered than our  
Host

Said gaily, "This is my domain, my cell,  
My hermitage, my cabin, what you will—  
I love it better than a snail his house.

But now ye shall be feasted with our  
best."

So, with more ardour than an unripe girl  
Left one day mistress of her mother's  
stores, 655

He went about his hospitable task.

My eyes were busy, and my thoughts no  
less,

And pleased I looked upon my grey-  
haired Friend,

As if to thank him; he returned that  
look,

Cheered, plainly, and yet serious. What  
a wreck 660

Had we about us! scattered was the floor,  
And, in like sort, chair, window-seat,  
and shelf,

With books, maps, fossils, withered  
plants and flowers,

And tufts of mountain moss. Mechanic  
tools

Lay intermixed with scraps of paper,  
some 665

Scribbled with verse: a broken angling-  
rod

And shattered telescope, together linked  
By cobwebs, stood within a dusty nook;

And instruments of music, some half-  
made,

Some in disgrace, hung dangling from  
the walls. 670

But speedily the promise was fulfilled;

A feast before us, and a courteous Host  
Inviting us in glee to sit and eat.

A napkin, white as foam of that rough  
brook

By which it had been bleached; o'erspread  
the board; 675

And was itself half-covered with a store  
Of dainties,—oaten bread, curd, cheese,  
and cream;

The thunder's greeting. Nor have nature's  
     laws  
 Left them ungifted with a power to yield  
 Music of finer tone ; a harmony, 710  
 So do I call it, though it be the hand  
 Of silence, though there be no voice ;—  
     the clouds,  
 The mist, the shadows, light of golden  
     suns,  
 Motions of moonlight, all come thither—  
     touch,  
 And have an answer—thither come, and  
     shape 715  
 A language not unwelcome to sick hearts  
 And idle spifits :—there the sun himself,  
 At the calm close of summer's longest day,  
 Rests his substantial orb ;—between those  
     heights  
 And on the top of either pinnacle, 720  
 More keenly than elsewhere in night's  
     blue vault,  
 Sparkle the stars, as of their station  
     proud.  
 Thoughts are not busier in the mind of  
     man  
 Than the mute agents stirring there :—  
     alone  
 Here do I sit and watch.—”  
         A fall of voice, 725  
 Regretted like the nightingale's last note,  
 Had scarcely closed this high-wrought  
     strain of rapture  
 Ere with inviting smile the Wanderer  
     said :  
 “Now for the tale with which you threat-  
     ened us !”  
 “In truth the threat escaped me un-  
     awares : 730  
 Should the tale tire you, let this challenge  
     stand  
 For my excuse. Dissevered from man-  
     kind,  
 As to your eyes and thoughts we must  
     have seemed  
 When ye looked down upon us from the  
     crag,  
 Islanders 'mid a stormy mountain sea,  
 We are not so ;—perpetually we touch  
 Upon the vulgar ordinances of the world ;  
 And he, whom this our cottage hath to-  
     day

Relinquished, lived dependent for his  
bread  
Upon the laws of public charity. 740  
The Housewife, tempted by such slender  
gains  
As might from that occasion be distilled,  
Opened, as she before had done for me,  
Her doors to admit this homeless Pen-  
sioner;  
The portion gave of coarse but whole-  
some fare 745  
Which appetite required—a blind dull  
nook,  
Such as she had, the *kennel* of his rest!  
This, in itself not ill, would yet have  
been  
Ill borne in earlier life; but his was now  
The still contentedness of seventy years.  
Calm did he sit under the wide-spread  
tree 751  
Of his old age; and yet less calm and  
meek,  
Winningly meek or venerably calm,  
Than slow and torpid; paying in this  
wise  
A penalty, if penalty it were, 755  
For spendthrift feats, excesses of his  
prime.  
I loved the old Man, for I pitied him!  
A task it was, I own, to hold discourse  
With one so slow in gathering up his  
thoughts,  
But he was a cheap pleasure to my eyes;  
Mild, inoffensive, ready in *his* way, 761  
And helpful to his utmost power: and  
there  
Our housewife knew full well what she  
possessed!  
He was her vassal of all labour, tilled  
Her garden, from the pasture fetched her  
kine; 765  
And, one among the orderly array  
Of hay-makers, beneath the burning sun  
Maintained his place; or heedfully pur-  
sued  
His course, on errands bound, to other  
vales,  
Leading sometimes an inexperienced child  
Too young for any profitable task. 771  
So moved he like a shadow that per-  
formed

Substantial service. Mark me now, and  
learn  
For what reward!—The moon her month-  
ly round  
Hath not completed since our dame, the  
queen 775  
Of this one cottage and this lonely dale,  
Into my little sanctuary rushed—  
Voice to a rueful treble humanised,  
And features in deplorable dismay.  
I treat the matter lightly, but, alas! 780  
It is most serious: persevering rain  
Had fallen in torrents; all the mountain-  
tops  
Were hidden, and black vapours coursed  
their sides;  
This had I seen, and saw; but, till she  
spake,  
Was wholly ignorant that my ancient  
Friend— 785  
Who at her bidding early and alone,  
Had clomb aloft to delve the moorland  
turf  
For winter fuel—to his noontide meal  
Returned not, and now, haply, on the  
heights  
Lay at the mercy of this raging storm.  
'Inhuman!'—said I, 'was an old Man's  
life 791  
Not worth the trouble of a thought?—  
alas!  
This notice comes too late.' With joy I  
saw  
Her husband enter—from a distant vale.  
We sallied forth together; found the  
tools 795  
Which the neglected veteran had dropped,  
But through all quarters looked for him  
in vain.  
We shouted—but no answer! Darkness  
fell  
Without remission of the blast or shower,  
And fears for our own safety drove us  
home. 800  
"I, who weep little, did, I will confess,  
The moment I was seated here alone,  
Honour my little cell with some few  
tears  
Which anger and resentment could not  
dry.

All night the storm endured: and, soon  
as help 805

Had been collected from the neighbour-  
ing vale,

With morning we renewed our quest:  
the wind

Was fallen, the rain abated, but the hills  
Lay shrouded in impenetrable mist;

And long and hopelessly we sought in  
vain: 810

Till, chancing on that lofty ridge to pass  
A heap of ruin—almost without walls

And wholly without roof (the bleached  
remains

Of a small chapel, where, in ancient time,  
The peasants of these lonely valleys used

To meet for worship on that central  
height)— 816

We there espied the object of our search,  
Lying full three parts buried among tufts

Of heath-plant, under and above him  
strewn,

To baffle, as he might, the watery storm:  
And there we found him breathing peace-  
ably, 821

Snug as a child that hides itself in sport  
'Mid a green hay-cock in a sunny field.

We spake—he made reply, but would not  
stir

At our entreaty; less from want of power  
Than apprehension and bewildering

thoughts. 826

“So was he lifted gently from the  
ground,

And with their freight homeward the  
shepherds moved

Through the dull mist, I following—when  
a step,

A single step, that freed me from the  
skirts 830

Of the blind vapour, opened to my view  
Glory beyond all glory ever seen

By waking sense or by the dreaming soul!  
The appearance, instantaneously dis-  
closed,

Was of a mighty city—boldly say 835  
A wilderness of building, sinking far

And self-withdrawn into a boundless  
depth,

Far sinking into splendour—without end!

Fabric it seemed of diamond and of gold,  
With alabaster domes, and silver spires,

And blazing terrace upon terrace, high  
Uplifted; here, serene pavilions bright,

In avenues disposed; there, towers begirt  
With battlements that on their restless

fronts  
Bore stars—illumination of all gems! 845

By earthly nature had the effect been  
wrought

Upon the dark materials of the storm  
Now pacified; on them, and on the coves

And mountain-steeps and summits, where-  
unto

The vapours had receded, taking there  
Their station under a cerulean sky. 851

Oh, 'twas an unimaginable sight!  
Clouds, mists, streams, watery rocks and

emerald turf,  
Clouds of all tincture, rocks and sapphire

sky,  
Confused, commingled, mutually in-  
flamed, 855

Molten together, and composing thus,  
Each lost in each, that marvellous array

Of temple, palace, citadel, and huge  
Fantastic pomp of structure without

name,  
In fleecy folds voluminous, enwrapped.

Right in the midst, where interspace  
appeared 861

Of open court, an object like a throne  
Under a shining canopy of state

Stood fixed; and fixed resemblances were  
seen

To implements of ordinary use, 865  
But vast in size, in substance glorified;

Such as by Hebrew Prophets were beheld  
In vision—forms uncouth of mightiest

power

For admiration and mysterious awe. 869  
This little Vale, a dwelling-place of Man,

Lay low beneath my feet; 'twas visible—  
I saw not, but I felt that it was there.

That which I saw was the revealed  
abode

Of Spirits in beatitude: my heart  
Swelled in my breast.—‘I have been

dead,’ I cried, 875  
‘And now I live! Oh! wherefore do I  
live?’

And with that pang I prayed to be no  
more !—

—But I forget our Charge, as utterly  
I then forgot him :—there I stood and  
gazed :

The apparition faded not away, 880  
And I descended.

Having reached the house,  
I found its rescued inmate safely lodged,  
And in serene possession of himself,  
Beside a fire whose genial warmth seemed  
met

By a faint shining from the heart, a gleam.  
Of comfort, spread over his pallid face.  
Great show of joy the housewife made,  
and truly

Was glad to find her conscience set at  
ease ;

And not less glad, for sake of her good  
name,

That the poor Sufferer had escaped with  
life. 890

But, though he seemed at first to have  
received

No harm, and uncomplaining as before  
Went through his usual tasks, a silent  
change

Soon showed itself : he lingered three  
short weeks ;

And from the cottage hath been borne  
to-day. 895

“So ends my dolorous tale, and glad  
I am

That it is ended.” At these words he  
turned—

And, with blithe air of open fellowship,  
Brought from the cupboard wine and  
stouter cheer,

Like one who would be merry. Seeing  
this, 900

My grey-haired Friend said courteously—  
“Nay, nay,

You have regaled us as a hermit ought ;  
Now let us forth into the sun !”—Our  
Host

Rose, though reluctantly, and forth we  
went.



Descending, disembodied, and diffused 40  
O'er the smooth surface of an ample crag,  
Lofty, and steep, and naked as a tower.  
All further progress here was barred ;—

And who,  
Thought I, if master of a vacant hour,  
Here would not linger, willingly detained? 45

Whether to such wild objects he were led  
When copious rains have magnified the  
stream

Into a loud and white-robed waterfall,  
Or introduced at this more quiet time. 49

Upon a semicirque of turf-clad ground,  
The hidden nook discovered to our view  
A mass of rock, resembling, as it lay  
Right at the foot of that moist precipice,  
A stranded ship, with keel upturned, that  
rests

Fearless of winds and waves. Three  
several stones 55

Stood near, of smaller size, and not unlike  
To monumental pillars: and, from these  
Some little space disjoined, a pair were  
seen,

That with united shoulders bore aloft  
A fragment, like an altar, flat and  
smooth: 60

Barren the tablet, yet thereon appeared  
A tall and shining holly, that had found  
A hospitable chink, and stood upright,  
As if inserted by some human hand

In mockery, to wither in the sun, 65  
Or lay its beauty flat before a breeze,  
The first that entered. But no breeze  
did now

Find entrance;—high or low appeared no  
trace

Of motion, sawe the water that descended,  
Diffused adown that barrier of steep rock,  
And softly creeping, like a breath of air,  
Such as is sometimes seen, and hardly  
seen,

To brush the still breast of a crystal lake.

“Behold a cabinet for sages built,  
Which kings might envy!”—Praise to  
this effect 75  
Broke from the happy old Man's reverend  
lip;

Who to the Solitary turned, and said,  
“In sooth, with love's familiar privilege,  
You have decried the wealth which is  
your own.

Among these rocks and stones, methinks,  
I see 80  
More than the heedless impress that  
belongs

To lonely nature's casual work: they bear  
A semblance strange of power intelligent,  
And of design not wholly worn away.

Boldest of plants that ever faced the  
wind, 85

How gracefully that slender shrub looks  
forth

From its fantastic birthplace! And I  
own,

Some shadowy intimations haunt me here,  
That in these shows a chronicle survives  
Of purposes akin to those of Man, 90

But wrought with mightier arm than now  
prevails.

—Voiceless the stream descends into the  
gulf

With timid lapse;—and lo! while in this  
strait

I stand—the chasm of sky above my head  
Is heaven's profoundest azure; no domain  
For fickle, short-lived clouds to occupy,  
Or to pass through; but rather an abyss  
In which the everlasting stars abide;

And whose soft gloom, and boundless  
depth, might tempt

The curious eye to look for them by day.

—Hail Contemplation! from the stately  
towers, 101

Reared by the industrious hand of human  
art

To lift thee high above the misty air  
And turbulence of murmuring cities vast;  
From academic groves, that have for thee  
Been planted, hither come and find a  
lodge 106

To which thou may'st resort for holier  
peace,—

From whose calm centre thou, through  
height or depth,

May'st penetrate, wherever truth shall  
lead;

Measuring through all degrees, until the  
scale 110

Of time and conscious nature disappear,  
Lost in unsearchable eternity<sup>1</sup>!"

A pause ensued; and with minuter care  
We scanned the various features of the  
scene: 114

And soon the Tenant of that lonely vale  
With courteous voice thus spake—

"I should have grieved  
Hereafter, not escaping self-reproach,  
If from my poor retirement ye had gone  
Leaving this nook unvisited: but, in sooth,  
Your unexpected presence had so roused  
My spirits, that they were bent on enter-  
prise; 121

And, like an ardent hunter, I forgot,  
Or, shall I say?—disdained, the game that  
lurks

At my own door. These shapes before our eyes  
And their arrangement, doubtless must  
be deemed 125

The sport of Nature, aided by blind  
Chance

Rudely to mock the works of toiling Man.  
And hence, this upright shaft of unhewn  
stone,

From Fancy, willing to set off her stores  
By sounding titles, hath acquired the  
name 130

Of Pompey's pillar; that I gravely style  
My Theban obelisk; and, there, behold  
A Druid cromlech!—thus I entertain  
The antiquarian humour, and am pleased  
To skim along the surfaces of things, 135

Beguiling harmlessly the listless hours.  
But if the spirit be oppressed by sense  
Of instability, revolt, decay,  
And change, and emptiness, these freaks  
of Nature

And her blind helper Chance, do then  
suffice 140

To quicken, and to aggravate—to feed  
Pity and scorn, and melancholy pride,  
Not less than that huge Pile (from some  
abyss

Of mortal power unquestionably sprung)  
Whose hoary diadem of pendent rocks 145  
Confines the shrill-voiced whirlwind,  
round and round

Eddying within its vast circumference,  
On Sarum's naked plain—than pyramid  
Of Egypt, unsubverted, undissolved—  
Or Syria's marble ruins towering high 150  
Above the sandy desert, in the light  
Of sun or moon.—Forgive me, if I say  
That an appearance which hath raised  
your minds

To an exalted pitch (the self-same cause  
Different effect producing) is for me 155  
Fraught rather with depression than  
delight,

Though shame it were, could I not look  
around,

By the reflection of your pleasure, pleased.  
Yet happier in my judgment, even than  
you

With your bright transports fairly may  
be deemed, 160

The wandering Herbalist,—who, clear alike  
From vain, and, that worse evil, vexing  
thoughts,

Casts, if he ever chance to enter here,  
Upon these uncouth Forms a slight  
regard

Of transitory interest, and peeps round  
For some rare floweret of the hills, or  
plant 166

Of craggy fountain; what he hopes for  
wins,

Or learns, at least, that 'tis not to be won:  
Then, keen and eager, as a fine-nosed  
hound

By soul-engrossing instinct driven along  
Through wood or open field, the harmless  
Man 171

Departs, intent upon his onward quest!—  
Nor is that Fellow-wanderer, so deem I,  
Less to be envied, (you may trace him oft

By scars which his activity has left 175  
Beside our roads and pathways, though,  
thank Heaven!

This covert nook reports not of his hand)  
He who with pocket-hammer smites the  
edge

Of luckless rock or prominent stone,  
disguised

In weather-stains or crusted o'er by  
Nature 180

With her first growths, detaching by the  
stroke

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 926.

A chip or splinter—to resolve his doubts;  
 And, with that ready answer satisfied,  
 The substance classes by some barbarous  
 name,  
 And hurries on; or from the fragments  
 picks 185  
 His specimen, if but haply interveined  
 With sparkling mineral, or should crystal  
 cube  
 Lurk in its cells—and thinks himself  
 enriched,  
 Wealthier, and doubtless wiser, than be-  
 fore!  
 Intrusted safely each to his pursuit, 190  
 Earnest alike, let both from hill to hill  
 Range; if it please them, speed from  
 clime to clime;  
 The mind is full—and free from pain their  
 pastime.”

“Then,” said I, interposing, “One is  
 near,  
 Who cannot but possess in your esteem  
 Place worthier still of envy. May I  
 name, 196  
 Without offence, that fair-faced cottage-  
 boy?  
 Dame Nature’s pupil of the lowest form,  
 Youngest apprentice in the school of art!  
 Him, as we entered from the open glen,  
 You might have noticed, busily engaged,  
 Heart, soul, and hands,—in mending the  
 defects 202  
 Left in the fabric of a leaky dam  
 Raised for enabling this penurious stream  
 To turn a slender mill (that new-made  
 plaything) 205  
 For his delight—the happiest he of all!”

“Far happiest,” answered the despond-  
 ing Man,  
 “If, such as now he is, he might remain!  
 Ah! what avails imagination high  
 Or question deep? what profits all that  
 earth, 210  
 Or heaven’s blue vault, is suffered to put  
 forth  
 Of impulse or allurements, for the Soul  
 To quit the beaten track of life, and soar  
 Far as she finds a yielding element  
 In past or future; far as she can go 215

Through time or space—if neither in the  
 one,  
 Nor in the other region, nor in aught  
 That Fancy, dreaming o’er the map of  
 things,  
 Hath placed beyond these penetrable  
 bounds,  
 Words of assurance can be heard; if  
 nowhere 220  
 A habitation, for consummate good,  
 Or for progressive virtue, by the search  
 Can be attained,—a better sanctuary  
 From doubt and sorrow, than the sense-  
 less grave?”

“Is this,” the grey-haired Wanderer  
 mildly said, 225  
 “The voice, which we so lately overheard,  
 To that same child, addressing tenderly  
 The consolations of a hopeful mind?  
 ‘His body is at rest, his soul in heaven.’  
 These were your words; and, verily,  
 methinks 230  
 Wisdom is oftentimes nearer when we  
 stoop  
 Than when we soar.”—

The Other, not displeased,  
 Promptly replied—“My notion is the  
 same.  
 And I, without reluctance, could decline  
 All act of inquisition whence we rise, 235  
 And what, when breath hath ceased, we  
 may become.  
 Here are we, in a bright and breathing  
 world.  
 Our origin, what matters it? In lack  
 Of worthier explanation, say at once  
 With the American (a thought which  
 suits 240  
 The place where now we stand) that  
 certain men  
 Leapt out together from a rocky cave;  
 And these were the first parents of man-  
 kind:  
 Or, if a different image be recalled  
 By the warm sunshine, and the jocund  
 voice 245  
 Of insects chirping out their careless lives  
 On these soft beds of thyme-besprinkled  
 turf,  
 Choose, with the gay Athenian, a conceit

As sound—blithe race! whose mantles  
 were bedecked  
 With golden grasshoppers, in sign that  
 they 250  
 Had sprung, like those bright creatures,  
 from the soil  
 Whereon their endless generations dwelt.  
 But stop! these theoretic fancies jar  
 On serious minds: then, as the Hindoos  
 draw 254  
 Their holy Ganges from a skyey fount,  
 Even so deduce the stream of human life  
 From seats of power divine; and hope,  
 or trust,  
 That our existence winds her stately  
 course  
 Beneath the sun, like Ganges, to make part  
 Of a living ocean; or, to sink engulfed,  
 Like Niger, in impenetrable sands 261  
 And utter darkness: thought which may  
 be faced,  
 Though comfortless!—

Not of myself I speak;  
 Such acquiescence neither doth imply,  
 In me, a meekly-bending spirit soothed  
 By natural piety; nor a lofty mind, 266  
 By philosophic discipline prepared  
 For calm subjection to acknowledged law;  
 Pleased to have been, contented not to be.  
 Such palms I boast not;—no! to me, who  
 find, 270  
 Reviewing my past way, much to condemn,  
 Little to praise, and nothing to regret,  
 (Save some remembrances of dream-like  
 joys  
 That scarcely seem to have belonged to  
 me)  
 If I must take my choice between the  
 pair 275  
 That rule alternately the weary hours,  
 Night is than day more acceptable; sleep  
 Doth, in my estimate of good, appear  
 A better state than waking; death than  
 sleep:  
 Feelingly sweet is stillness after storm,  
 Though under covert of the wormy  
 ground! 281

“Yet be it said, in justice to myself,  
 That in more genial times, when I was  
 free

To explore the destiny of human kind  
 (Not as an intellectual game pursued 285  
 With curious subtilty, from wish to cheat  
 Irsome sensations; but by love of truth  
 Urged on, or haply by intense delight  
 In feeding thought, wherever thought  
 could feed)  
 I did not rank with those (too dull or  
 nice, 290  
 For to my judgment such they then ap-  
 peared,  
 Or too aspiring, thankless at the best)  
 Who, in this frame of human life, perceive  
 An object whereunto their souls are tied  
 In discontented wedlock; nor did e'er,  
 From me, those dark impervious shades,  
 that hang 296  
 Upon the region whither we are bound,  
 Exclude a power to enjoy the vital beams  
 Of present sunshine.—Deities that float  
 On wings, angelic Spirits! I could muse  
 O'er what from eldest time we have been  
 told 301  
 Of your bright forms and glorious facul-  
 ties,  
 And with the imagination rest content,  
 Not wishing more; repining not to tread  
 The little sinuous path of earthly care,  
 By flowers embellished, and by springs  
 refreshed. 306  
 —‘Blow winds of autumn!—let your chill-  
 ing breath  
 Take the live herbage from the mead,  
 and strip  
 The shady forest of its green attire,—  
 And let the bursting clouds to fury rouse  
 The gentle brooks!—Your desolating  
 sway, 311  
 Sheds,’ I exclaimed, ‘no sadness upon me,  
 And no disorder in your rage I find.  
 What dignity, what beauty, in this change  
 From mild to angry, and from sad to gay,  
 Alternate and revolving! How benign,  
 How rich in animation and delight,  
 How bountiful these elements—compared  
 With aught, as more desirable and fair,  
 Devised by fancy for the golden age; 320  
 Or the perpetual warbling that prevails  
 In Arcady, beneath unaltered skies,  
 Through the long year in constant quiet  
 bound,

Night hushed as night, and day serene as day !'

—But why this tedious record ?—Age, we know,

Is garrulous ; and solitude, is apt  
To anticipate the privilege of Age.

From far ye come ; and surely with a hope

Of better entertainment :—let us hence !"

Loth to forsake the spot, and still more loth

To be diverted from our present theme,  
I said, "My thoughts, agreeing, Sir, with yours,

Would push this censure farther ;—for, if smiles

Of scornful pity be the just reward

Of Poesy thus courteously employed

In framing models to improve the scheme

Of Man's existence, and recast the world,

Why should not grave Philosophy be styled,

Herself, a dreamer of a kindred stock,

A dreamer yet more spiritless and dull ?

Yes, shall the fine immunities she boasts

Establish sounder titles of esteem

For her, who (all too timid and reserved

For onset, for resistance too inert,

Too weak for suffering, and for hope too tame)

Placed, among flowery gardens curtained round

With world-excluding groves, the brotherhood

Of soft Epicureans, taught—if they

The ends of being would secure, and win

The crown of wisdom—to yield up their souls

To a voluptuous unconcern, preferring Tranquillity to all things. Or is she,"

I cried, "more worthy of regard, the Power,

Who, for the sake of sterner quiet, closed

The Stoic's heart against the vain approach

Of admiration, and all sense of joy ?"

His countenance gave notice that my zeal

Accorded little with his present mind ;

I ceased, and he resumed.—" Ah ! gentle Sir,

Slight, if you will, the means ; but spare to slight

The end of those, who did, by system, rank,

As the prime object of a wise man's aim,

Security from shock of accident,

Release from fear ; and cherished peaceful days

For their own sakes, as mortal life's chief good,

And only reasonable felicity.

What motive drew, what impulse, I would ask,

Through a long course of later ages, drove,

The hermit to his cell in forest wide ;

Or what detained him, till his closing eyes

Took their last farewell of the sun and stars,

Fast anchored in the desert ?—Not alone

Dread of the persecuting sword, remorse,

Wrongs unredressed, or insults unavenged

And unavengeable, defeated pride,

Prosperity subverted, maddening want,

Friendship betrayed, affection unreturned,

Love with despair, or grief in agony ;—

Not always from intolerable pangs

He fled ; but, compassed round by pleasure, sighed

For independent happiness ; craving peace,

The central feeling of all happiness,

Not as a refuge from distress or pain,

A breathing-time, vacation, or a truce,

But for its absolute self ; a life of peace,

Stability without regret or fear ;

That hath been, is, and shall be evermore !—

Such the reward he sought ; and wore out life,

There, where on few external things his heart

Was set, and those his own ; or, if not his,

Subsisting under nature's steadfast law.

"What other yearning was the master tie

Of the monastic brotherhood, upon rock

Aerial, or in green secluded vale,  
 One after one, collected from afar, 395  
 An undissolving fellowship?—What but  
 this,

The universal instinct of repose,  
 The longing for confirmed tranquillity,  
 Inward and outward; humble, yet sublime:

The life where hope and memory are as  
 one; 400

Where earth is quiet and her face unchanged

Save by the simplest toil of human hands  
 Or season's difference; the immortal Soul  
 Consistent in self-rule; and heaven revealed

To meditation in that quietness!— 405  
 Such was their scheme: and though the  
 wished-for end

By multitudes was missed, perhaps attained

By none, they for the attempt, and pains  
 employed,

Do, in my present censure, stand redeemed  
 From the unqualified disdain, that once  
 Would have been cast upon them by my  
 voice 411

Delivering her decisions from the seat  
 Of forward youth—that scruples not to  
 solve

Doubts, and determine questions, by the  
 rules 414

Of inexperienced judgment, ever prone  
 To overweening faith; and is inflamed,  
 By courage, to demand from real life  
 The test of act and suffering, to provoke  
 Hostility—how dreadful when it comes,  
 Whether affliction be the foe, or guilt!

“A child of earth, I rested, in that  
 stage 421  
 Of my past course to which these thoughts  
 advert,

Upon earth's native energies; forgetting  
 That mine was a condition which required  
 Nor energy, nor fortitude—a calm 425  
 Without vicissitude; which, if the like  
 Had been presented to my view elsewhere,  
 I might have even been tempted to despise.

But no—for the serene was also bright;

Enlivened happiness with joy o'erflowing,  
 With joy, and—oh! that memory should  
 survive 431

To speak the word—with rapture! Nature's boon,

Life's genuine inspiration, happiness  
 Above what rules can teach, or fancy  
 feign;

Abused, as all possessions are abused 435  
 That are not prized according to their  
 worth.

And yet, what worth? what good is given  
 to men,

More solid than the gilded clouds of  
 heaven?

What joy more lasting than a vernal  
 flower?—

None! 'tis the general plaint of human  
 kind 440

In solitude: and mutually addressed  
 From each to all, for wisdom's sake:—

This truth  
 The priest announces from his holy seat:  
 And, crowned with garlands in the summer  
 grove,

The poet fits it to his pensive lyre. 445  
 Yet, ere that final resting-place be gained,  
 Sharp contradictions may arise, by doom

Of this same life, compelling us to grieve  
 That the prosperities of love and joy  
 Should be permitted, oftentimes, to endure  
 So long, and be at once cast down for  
 ever. 451

Oh! tremble, ye, to whom hath been assigned

A course of days composing happy  
 months,

And they as happy years; the present  
 still

So like the past, and both so firm a pledge  
 Of a congenial future, that the wheels 456  
 Of pleasure move without the aid of hope:  
 For Mutability is Nature's bane;

And slighted Hope will be avenged; and,  
 when

Ye need her favours, ye shall find her not;  
 But in her stead—fear—doubt—and  
 agony! 461

This was the bitter language of the  
 heart:

But, while he spake, look, gesture, tone  
of voice,

Though discomposed and vehement, were  
such

As skill and graceful nature might sug-  
gest 465

To a proficient of the tragic scene

Standing before the multitude, beset

With dark events. Desirous to divert

Or stem the current of the speaker's  
thoughts,

We signified a wish to leave that place

Of stillness and close privacy, a nook 471

That seemed for self-examination made;

Or, for confession, in the sinner's need,

Hidden from all men's view. To our at-  
tempt

He yielded not; but, pointing to a slope

Of mossy turf defended from the sun, 476

And on that couch inviting us to rest,

Full on that tender-hearted Man he turned

A serious eye, and his speech thus re-  
newed.

"You never saw, your eyes did never  
look 480

On the bright form of Her whom once I  
loved:—

Her silver voice was heard upon the earth,

A sound unknown to you; else, honoured  
Friend!

Your heart had borne a pitiable share

Of what I suffered, when I wept that loss,

And suffer now, not seldom, from the  
thought 486

That I remember, and can weep no more.—

Stripped as I am of all the golden fruit

Of self-esteem; and by the cutting blasts

Of self-reproach familiarly assailed; 490

Yet would I not be of such wintry bare-  
ness

But that some leaf of your regard should  
hang

Upon my naked branches:—lively  
thoughts

Give birth, full often, to unguarded words;

I grieve that, in your presence, from my  
tongue 495

Too much of frailty hath already dropped;

But that too much demands still more.

You know,

Revered Compatriot—and to you, kind  
Sir,

(Not to be deemed a stranger, as you come  
Following the guidance of these welcome  
feet 500

To our secluded vale) it may be told—

That my demerits did not sue in vain

To One on whose mild radiance many  
gazed

With hope, and all with pleasure. This  
fair Bride—

In the devotedness of youthful love, 505

Preferring me to parents, and the choir

Of gay companions, to the natal roof,

And all known places and familiar sights

(Resigned with sadness gently weighing  
down

Her trembling expectations, but no more

Than did to her due honour, and to me

Yielded, that day, a confidence sublime

In what I had to build upon)—this Bride

Young, modest, meek, and beautiful, I led

To a low cottage in a sunny bay, 515

Where the salt sea innocuously breaks,

And the sea breeze as innocently breathes,

On Devon's leafy shores;—a sheltered  
hold,

In a soft clime encouraging the soil

To a luxuriant bounty!—As our steps 520

Approach the embowered abode—our  
chosen seat—

See, rooted in the earth, her kindly bed,

The undangered myrtle, decked with  
flowers,

Before the threshold stands to welcome us!

While, in the flowering myrtle's neigh-  
bourhood, 525

Not overlooked but courting no regard,

Those native plants, the holly and the  
yew,

Gave modest intimation to the mind

How willingly their aid they would unite

With the green myrtle, to endear the  
hours 530

Of winter, and protect that pleasant place.

—Wild were the walks upon those lonely  
Downs,

Track leading into track; how marked,  
how worn

Into bright verdure, between fern and  
gorse,

Winding away its never-ending line 535  
On their smooth surface, evidence was  
none:

But, there, lay open to our daily haunt,  
A range of unappropriated earth,  
Where youth's ambitious feet might move  
at large;

Whence, unmolested wanderers, we be-  
held 540

The shining giver of the day diffuse  
His brightness o'er a tract of sea and land  
Gay as our spirits, free as our desires;  
As our enjoyments, boundless.—From  
those heights

We dropped, at pleasure, into sylvan  
combs; 545

Where arbours of impenetrable shade,  
And mossy seats, detained us side by side,  
With hearts at ease, and knowledge in  
our hearts

'That all the grove and all the day was  
ours.'

"O happy time! still happier was at  
hand; 550

For Nature called my Partner to resign  
Her share in the pure freedom of that  
life,

Enjoyed by us in common.—To my hope,  
To my heart's wish, my tender Mate be-  
came

The thankful captive of maternal bonds;  
And those wild paths were left to me  
alone. 556

There could I meditate on follies past;  
And, like a weary voyager escaped  
From risk and hardship, inwardly retrace  
A course of vain delights and thoughtless  
guilt, 560

And self-indulgence—without shame pur-  
sued.

There, undisturbed, could think of and  
could thank

Her whose submissive spirit was to me  
Rule and restraint—my guardian—shall  
I say

That earthly Providence, whose guiding  
love 565

Within a port of rest had lodged me safe;  
Safe from temptation, and from danger  
far?

Strains followed of acknowledgment ad-  
dressed

To an Authority enthroned above  
The reach of sight; from whom, as from  
their source, 570

Proceed all visible ministers of good  
That walk the earth—Father of heaven  
and earth,

Father, and king, and judge, adored and  
feared!

These acts of mind, and memory, and  
heart,

And spirit—interrupted and relieved 575  
By observations transient as the glance  
Of flying sunbeams, or to the outward  
form

Cleaving with power inherent and intense,  
As the mute insect fixed upon the plant

On whose soft leaves it hangs, and from  
whose cup 580  
It draws its nourishment imperceptibly—  
Endeared my wanderings; and the mo-  
ther's kiss

And infant's smile awaited my return.

"In privacy we dwelt, a wedded pair,  
Companions daily, often all day long; 585  
Not placed by fortune within easy reach  
Of various intercourse, nor wishing aught  
Beyond the allowance of our own fire-  
side,

The twain within our happy cottage born,  
Inmates, and heirs of our united love; 590  
Graced mutually by difference of sex,  
And with no wider interval of time  
Between their several births than served  
for one

To establish something of a leader's sway;  
Yet left them joined by sympathy in  
age; 595

Equals in pleasure, fellows in pursuit.  
On these two pillars rested as in air  
Our solitude.

It soothes me to perceive,  
Your courtesy withholds not from my  
words

Attentive audience. But, oh! gentle  
Friends, 600

As times of quiet and unbroken peace,  
Though, for a nation, times of blessed-  
ness,

Give back faint echoes from the historian's  
page;

So, in the imperfect sounds of this dis-  
course,

Depressed I hear, how faithless is the  
voice 605

Which those most blissful days rever-  
berate.

What special record can, or need, be given  
To rules and habits, whereby much was  
done,

But all within the sphere of little things;  
Of humble, though, to us, important cares,  
And precious interests? Smoothly did  
our life 611

Advance, swerving not from the path  
prescribed;

Her annual, her diurnal, round alike  
Maintained with faithful care. And you  
divine

The worst effects that our condition saw  
If you imagine changes slowly wrought,  
And in their process unperceivable;  
Not wished for; sometimes noticed with  
a sigh,

(Whate'er of good or lovely they might  
bring)

Sighs of regret, for the familiar good 620  
And loveliness endeared which they re-  
moved.

"Seven years of occupation undisturbed  
Established seemingly a right to hold  
That happiness; and use and habit gave  
To what an alien spirit had acquired 625  
A patrimonial sanctity. And thus,  
With thoughts and wishes bounded to  
this world,

I lived and breathed; most grateful—if  
to enjoy\*

Without repining or desire for more,  
For different lot, or change to higher  
sphere, 630

(Only except some impulses of pride  
With no determined object, though up-  
held

By theories with suitable support)—  
Most grateful, if in such wise to enjoy  
Be proof of gratitude for what we have;  
Else, I allow, most thankless.—But, at  
once, 636

From some dark seat of fatal power was  
urged

A claim that shattered all.—Our blooming  
girl,

Caught in the gripe of death, with such  
brief time

To struggle in as scarcely would allow 640  
Her cheek to change its colour, was  
conveyed

From us to inaccessible worlds, to regions  
Where height, or depth, admits not the  
approach

Of living man, though longing to pursue.  
—With even as brief a warning—and how  
soon, 645

With what short interval of time between,  
I tremble yet to think of—our last prop,  
Our happy life's only remaining stay—  
The brother followed; and was seen no  
more!

"Calm as a frozen lake when ruthless  
winds 650

Blow fiercely, agitating earth and sky,  
The Mother now remained; as if in her,  
Who, to the lowest region of the soul,  
Had been erewhile unsettled and dis-  
turbed,

This second visitation had no power 655  
To shake; but only to bind up and seal;  
And to establish thankfulness of heart  
In Heaven's determinations, ever just.  
The eminence whereon her spirit stood,  
Mine was unable to attain. Immense  
The space that severed us! But, as the  
sight 661

Communicates with heaven's ethereal orbs  
Incalculably distant; so, I felt  
That consolation may descend from far  
(And that is intercourse, and union, too,)  
While, overcome with speechless grati-  
tude, 666

And, with a holier love inspired, I looked  
On her—at once superior to my woes  
And partner of my loss.—O heavy change!  
Dimness o'er this clear luminary crept 670  
Insensibly;—the immortal and divine  
Yielded to mortal reflux; her pure glory,  
As from the pinnacle of worldly state  
Wretched ambition drops astounded, fell  
Into a gulf obscure of silent grief, 675

And keen heart-anguish—of itself a-  
shamed,  
Yet obstinately cherishing itself:  
And, so consumed, she melted from my  
arms;  
And left me, on this earth, disconsolate!

“What followed cannot be reviewed in  
thought; 680  
Much less, retraced in words. If she,  
of life  
Blameless, so intimate with love and joy  
And all the tender motions of the soul,  
Had been supplanted, could I hope to  
stand—

Infirm, dependent, and now destitute? 685  
I called on dreams and visions, to disclose  
That which is veiled from waking thought;  
conjured

Eternity, as men constrain a ghost  
To appear and answer; to the grave I  
spake

Imploringly;—looked up, and asked the  
Heavens 690

If Angels traversed their cerulean floors,  
If fixed or wandering star could tidings  
yield

Of the departed spirit—what abode  
It occupies—what consciousness retains  
Of former loves and interests. Then my  
soul 695

Turned inward,—to examine of what stuff  
Time's fetters are composed; and life was  
put

To inquisition, long and profitless!  
By pain of heart—now checked—and now  
impelled—

The intellectual power, through words  
and things, 700

Went sounding on, a dim and perilous  
way!

And from those transports, and these toils  
abstruse,

Some trace am I enabled to retain  
Of time, else lost;—existing unto me  
Only by records in myself not found. 705

“From that abstraction I was roused,—  
and how?

Even as a thoughtful shepherd by a flash  
Of lightning startled in a gloomy cave

Of these wild hills. For, lo! the dread  
Bastille,

With all the chambers in its horrid  
towers, 710

Fell to the ground:—by violence over-  
thrown

Of indignation; and with shouts that  
drowned

The crash it made in falling! From the  
wreck

A golden palace rose, or seemed to rise,  
The appointed seat of equitable law 715  
And mild paternal sway. The potent  
shock

I felt: the transformation I perceived,  
As marvellously seized as in that moment  
When, from the blind mist issuing, I  
beheld

Glory—beyond all glory ever seen, 720  
Confusion infinite of heaven and earth,  
Dazzling the soul. Meanwhile, prophetic  
harps

In every grove were ringing, ‘War shall  
cease;

Did ye not hear that conquest is abjured?  
Bring garlands, bring forth choicest  
flowers, to deck 725

The tree of Liberty.’—My heart re-  
bounded;

My melancholy voice the chorus joined;  
—‘Be joyful all ye nations; in all lands,  
Ye that are capable of joy be glad!

Henceforth, whate’er is wanting to your-  
selves 730

In others ye shall promptly find;—and all,  
Enriched by mutual and reflected wealth,  
Shall with one heart honour their common  
kind.’

“Thus was I reconverted to the world;  
Society became my glittering bride, 735  
And airy hopes my children.—From the  
depths

Of natural passion, seemingly escaped,  
My soul diffused herself in wide embrace  
Of institutions, and the forms of things;  
As they exist, in mutable array, 740  
Upon life's surface. What, though in my  
veins

There flowed no Gallic blood, nor had I  
breathed

The air of France, not less than Gallie  
zeal

Kindled and burnt among the sapless  
twigs

Of my exhausted heart. If busy men 745  
In sober conclave met, to weave a web  
Of amity, whose living threads should  
stretch

Beyond the seas, and to the farthest pole,  
There did I sit, assisting. If, with noise  
And acclamation, crowds in open air 750  
Expressed the tumult of their minds, my  
voice

There mingled, heard or not. The powers  
of song

I left not uninvoked; and, in still groves,  
Where mild enthusiasts tuned a pensive  
lay

Of thanks and expectation, in accord 755  
With their belief, I sang Saturnian rule  
Returned,—a progeny of golden years  
Permitted to descend, and bless mankind.  
—With promises the Hebrew Scriptures  
teem:

I felt their invitation; and resumed 760  
A long-suspended office in the House  
Of public worship, where, the glowing  
phrase

Of ancient inspiration serving me,  
I promised also,—with undaunted trust  
Foretold, and added prayer to prophecy;  
The admiration winning of the crowd; 766  
The help desiring of the pure devout.

“Scorn and contempt forbid me to  
proceed!

But History, time’s slavish scribe, will tell  
How rapidly the zealots of the cause 770  
Disbanded—or in hostile ranks appeared;  
Some, tired of honest service; these, out-  
done,

Disgusted therefore, or appalled, by aims  
Of fiercer zealots—so confusion reigned,  
And the more faithful were compelled to  
exclaim, 775

As Brutus did to Virtue, ‘Liberty,  
I worshipped thee, and find thee but a  
Shade!’

“Such recantation had for me no charm,  
Nor would I bend to it; who should have  
grieved

At aught, however fair, that bore the  
mien 780

Of a conclusion, or catastrophe.  
Why then conceal, that, when the simply  
good

In timid selfishness withdrew, I sought  
Other support, not scrupulous whence it  
came;

And, by what compromise it stood, not  
nice? 785

Enough if notions seemed to be high-  
pitched,

And qualities determined.—Among men  
So characterized did I maintain a strife  
Hopeless, and still more hopeless every  
hour;

But, in the process, I began to feel 790  
That, if the emancipation of the world  
Were missed, I should at least secure my  
own,

And be in part compensated. For rights,  
Widely—invetterately usurped upon,  
I spake with vehemence; and promptly  
seized 795

All that Abstraction furnished for my  
needs

Or purposes; nor scrupled to proclaim,  
And propagate, by liberty of life,  
Those new persuasions. Not that I re-  
joiced,

Or even found pleasure, in such vagrant  
course, 800

For its own sake; but farthest from the  
walk

Which I had trod in happiness and  
peace,

Was most inviting to a troubled mind;  
That, in a struggling and distempered  
world,

Saw a seductive image of herself. 805  
Yet, mark the contradictions of which  
Man

Is still the sport! Here Nature was my  
guide,

The Nature of the dissolute; but thee,  
O fostering Nature! I rejected—smiled  
At others’ tears in pity; and in scorn  
At those, which thy soft influence some-  
times drew 811

From my unguarded heart.—The tran-  
quil shores

Of Britain circumscribed me; else, perhaps

I might have been entangled among deeds,

Which, now, as infamous, I should abhor—  
Despise, as senseless: for my spirit relished 816

Strangely the exasperation of that Land,  
Which turned an angry beak against the down

Of her own breast; confounded into hope  
Of disencumbering thus her fretful wings.

“But all was quieted by iron bonds  
Of military sway. The shifting aims,  
The moral interests, the creative might,  
The varied functions and high attributes  
Of civil action, yielded to a power 825  
Formal, and odious, and contemptible.

—In Britain, ruled a panic dread of change;

The weak were praised, rewarded, and advanced;

And, from the impulse of a just disdain,  
Once more did I retire into myself. 830

There feeling no contentment, I resolved  
To fly, for safeguard, to some foreign shore,

Remote from Europe; from her blasted hopes;

Her fields of carnage, and polluted air.

“Fresh blew the wind, when o’er the Atlantic Main 835

The ship went gliding with her thoughtless crew;

And who among them but an Exile, freed  
From discontent, indifferent, pleased to sit

Among the busily-employed, not more  
With obligation charged, with service taxed, 840

Than the loose pendant—to the idle wind  
Upon the tall mast streaming. But, ye Powers

Of soul and sense mysteriously allied,  
O, never let the Wretched, if a choice  
Be left him, trust the freight of his distress 845

To a long voyage on the silent deep!  
For, like a plague, will memory break out;

And, in the blank and solitude of things,  
Upon his spirit, with a fever’s strength,  
Will conscience prey.—Feebly must they have felt 850

Who, in old time, attired with snakes and whips

The vengeful Furies. *Beautiful* regards  
Were turned on me—the face of her I loved;

The Wife and Mother pitifully fixing  
Tender reproaches, insupportable! 855

Where now that boasted liberty? No welcome

From unknown objects I received; and those;

Known and familiar, which the vaulted sky

Did, in the placid clearness of the night,  
Disclose, had accusations to prefer 860

Against my peace. Within the cabin stood

That volume—as a compass for the soul—  
Revered among the nations. I implored

Its guidance; but the infallible support  
Of faith was wanting. Tell me, why refused 865

To One by storms annoyed and adverse winds;

Perplexed with currents; of his weakness sick;

Of vain endeavours tired; and by his own,  
And by his nature’s, ignorance, dismayed!

“Long wished-for sight, the Western World appeared; 870

And, when the ship was moored, I leaped ashore

Indignantly—resolved to be a man,  
Who, having o’er the past no power, would live

No longer in subjection to the past, 874  
With abject mind—from a tyrannic lord

Inviting penance, fruitlessly endured:  
So, like a fugitive, whose feet have cleared

Some boundary, which his followers may not cross

In prosecution of their deadly chase,  
Respiring I looked round.—How bright the sun, 880

The breeze how soft! Can any thing produced

In the old World compare, thought I, for  
power

And majesty with this gigantic stream,  
Sprung from the desert? And behold  
a city

Fresh, youthful, and aspiring! What are  
these 885

To me, or I to them? As much, at least  
As he desires that they should be, whom  
winds

And waves have wafted to this distant  
shore,

In the condition of a damaged seed,  
Whose fibres cannot, if they would, take  
root. 890

Here may I roam at large;—my business  
is,

Roaming at large, to observe, and not to  
feel

And, therefore, not to act—convinced  
that all

Which bears the name of action, how-  
soever

Beginning, ends in servitude—still pain-  
ful, 895

And mostly profitless. And, sooth to  
say,

On nearer view, a motley spectacle  
Appeared, of high pretensions—unre-  
proved

But by the obstreperous voice of higher  
still;

Big passions strutting on a petty stage;  
Which a detached spectator may regard  
Not unamused.—But ridicule demands  
Quick change of objects; and, to laugh  
alone, 903

At a composing distance from the haunts  
Of strife and folly, though it be a treat  
As choice as rousing Leisure can bestow;  
Yet, in the very centre of the crowd,  
To keep the secret of a poignant scorn,  
Howe'er to airy Demons suitable,  
Of all unsocial courses, is least fit 910  
For the gross spirit of mankind,—the  
one

That soonest fails to please, and quickest  
turns

Into vexation.

Let us, then, I said,

Leave this unkut Republic to the scourge

Of her own passions; and to regions haste,  
Whose shades have never felt the en-  
croaching axe, 916

Or soil endured a transfer in the mart  
Of dire rapacity. There, Man abides,  
Primeval Nature's child. A creature weak  
In combination, (wherefore else driven  
back 920

So far, and of his old inheritance  
So easily deprived?) but, for that cause,  
More dignified, and stronger in himself;  
Whether to act, judge, suffer, or enjoy.  
True, the intelligence of social art 925  
Hath overpowered his forefathers, and  
soon

Will sweep the remnant of his line away;  
But contemplations, worthier, nobler far  
Than her destructive energies, attend 929  
His independence, when along the side  
Of Mississippi, or that northern stream<sup>1</sup>  
Thatspreads into successive seas, he walks;  
Pleased to perceive his own unshackled  
life,

And his innate capacities of soul,  
There imaged: or when, having gained  
the top 935

Of some commanding eminence, which yet  
Intruder ne'er beheld, he thence surveys  
Regions of wood and wide savannah, vast  
Expanse of unappropriated earth,  
With mind that sheds a light on what he  
sees; 940

Free as the sun, and lonely as the sun,  
Pouring above his head its radiance down  
Upon a living and rejoicing world!

“So, westward, tow’rd the unviolated  
woods

I bent my way; and, roaming far and  
wide, 945

Failed not to greet the merry Mocking-  
bird;

And, while the melancholy Muccawiss  
(The sportive bird's companion in the  
grove)

Repeated o'er and o'er his plaintive cry,  
I sympathised at leisure with the sound;  
But that pure archetype of human great-  
ness, 951

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 927.

I found him not. There, in his stead,  
 appeared  
 A creature, squalid, vengeful, and im-  
 pure ;  
 Remorseless, and submissive to no law  
 But superstitious fear, and abject sloth.

“ Enough is told ! Here am I—ye have  
 heard 956  
 What evidence I seek, and vainly seek ;  
 What from my fellow-beings I require,  
 And either they have not to give, or I  
 Lack virtue to receive ; what I myself,  
 Too oft by wilful forfeiture, have lost 961  
 Nor can regain. How languidly I look  
 Upon this visible fabric of the world,  
 May be divined—perhaps it hath been  
 said :—

But spare your pity, if there be in me 965  
 Aught that deserves respect : for I exist,  
 Within myself, not comfortless.—The  
 tenour  
 Which my life holds, he readily may con-  
 ceive  
 Whoe’er hath stood to watch a mountain  
 brook  
 In some still passage of its course, and  
 seen, 970  
 Within the depths of its capacious breast,

Inverted trees, rocks, clouds, and azure  
 sky ;  
 And, on its glassy surface, specks of foam,  
 And conglobated bubbles undissolved,  
 Numerous as stars ; that, by their onward  
 lapse, 975  
 Betray to sight the motion of the stream,  
 Else imperceptible. Meanwhile, is heard  
 A softened roar, or murmur ; and the  
 sound  
 Though soothing, and the little floating  
 isles  
 Though beautiful, are both by Nature  
 charged 980  
 With the same pensive office ; and make  
 known  
 Through what perplexing labyrinths, ab-  
 rupt  
 Precipitations, and untoward straits,  
 The earth-born wanderer hath passed ;  
 and quickly, 984  
 That respite o’er, like traverses and toils  
 Must he again encounter.—Such a stream  
 Is human Life ; and so the Spirit fares  
 In the best quiet to her course allowed ;  
 And such is mine,—save only for a hope  
 That my particular current soon will reach  
 The unfathomable gulf, where all is  
 still !” 991

## BOOK FOURTH.

### DESPONDENCY CORRECTED.

#### ARGUMENT.

State of feeling produced by the foregoing Narrative.—A belief in a superintending Providence the only adequate support under affliction.—Wanderer's ejaculation.—Acknowledges the difficulty of a lively faith.—Hence immoderate sorrow.—Exhortations.—How received.—Wanderer applies his discourse to that other cause of dejection in the Solitary's mind.—Disappointment from the French Revolution.—States grounds of hope, and insists on the necessity of patience and fortitude with respect to the course of great revolutions.—Knowledge the source of tranquillity.—Rural Solitude favourable to knowledge of the inferior Creatures; Study of their habits and ways recommended; exhortation to bodily exertion and communion with Nature.—Morbid Solitude pitiable.—Superstition better than apathy.—Apathy and destitution unknown in the infancy of society.—The various modes of Religion prevented it.—Illustrated in the Jewish, Persian, Babylonian, Chaldean, and Grecian modes of belief.—Solitary interposes.—Wanderer points out the influence of religious and imaginative feeling in the humble ranks of society, illustrated from present and past times.—These principles tend to recall exploded superstitions and Popery.—Wanderer rebuts this charge, and contrasts the dignities of the Imagination with the presumptuous littleness of certain modern Philosophers.—Recommends other lights and guides.—Asserts the power of the Soul to regenerate herself; Solitary asks how.—Reply.—Personal appeal.—Exhortation to activity of body renewed.—How to commune with Nature.—Wanderer concludes with a legitimate union of the imagination, affections, understanding, and reason.—Effect of his discourse.—Evening; Return to the Cottage.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>HERE closed the Tenant of that lonely<br/>vale<br/>His mournful narrative—commenced in<br/>pain,<br/>In pain commenced, and ended without<br/>peace:<br/>Yet tempered, not unfrequently, with<br/>strains<br/>Of native feeling, grateful to our minds;<br/>And yielding surely some relief to his, 6<br/>While we sat listening with compassion<br/>due.<br/>A pause of silence followed; then, with<br/>voice<br/>That did not falter though the heart was<br/>moved,<br/>The Wanderer said:—</p> | <p>Of infinite benevolence and power; 15<br/>Whose everlasting purposes embrace<br/>All accidents, converting them to good.<br/>—The darts of anguish fly not where the<br/>seat<br/>Of suffering hath been thoroughly fortified<br/>By acquiescence in the Will supreme 20<br/>For time and for eternity; by faith,<br/>Faith absolute in God, including hope,<br/>And the defence that lies in boundless<br/>love<br/>Of his perfections; with habitual dread<br/>Of aught unworthily conceived, endured<br/>Impatiently, ill-done, or left undone, 26<br/>To the dishonour of his holy name.<br/>Soul of our Souls, and safeguard of the<br/>world!<br/>Sustain, thou only canst, the sick of<br/>heart;<br/>Restore their languid spirits, and recall 30<br/>Their lost affections unto thee and<br/>thine!"</p> |
|--|--|

Then, as we issued from that covert  
 nook,  
 He thus continued, lifting up his eyes  
 To heaven:—"How beautiful this dome  
 of sky;  
 And the vast hills, in fluctuation fixed 35  
 At thy command, how awful! Shall the  
 Soul,  
 Human and rational, report of thee  
 Even less than these!—Be mute who will,  
 who can,  
 Yet I will praise thee with impassioned  
 voice:  
 My lips, that may forget thee in the  
 crowd, 40  
 Cannot forget thee here; where thou hast  
 built,  
 For thy own glory, in the wilderness!  
 Me didst thou constitute a priest of thine,  
 In such a temple as we now behold  
 Reared for thy presence: therefore am I  
 bound 45  
 To worship, here, and everywhere—as one  
 Not doomed to ignorance, though forced  
 to tread,  
 From childhood up, the ways of poverty;  
 From unreflecting ignorance preserved,  
 And from debasement rescued.—By thy  
 grace 50  
 The particle divine remained unquenched;  
 And, 'mid the wild weeds of a rugged soil,  
 Thy bounty caused to flourish deathless  
 flowers,  
 From paradise transplanted: wintry age  
 Impends; the frost will gather round my  
 heart; 55  
 If the flowers wither, I am worse than  
 dead!  
 —Come, labour, when the worn-out frame  
 requires  
 Perpetual sabbath; come, disease and  
 want;  
 And sad exclusion through decay of  
 sense;  
 But leave me unabated trust in thee— 60  
 And let thy favour, to the end of life,  
 Inspire me with ability to seek  
 Repose and hope among eternal things—  
 Father of heaven and earth! and I am  
 rich,  
 And will possess my portion in content!

"And what are things eternal?—powers  
 depart," 66  
 The grey-haired Wanderer steadfastly  
 replied,  
 Answering the question which himself  
 had asked,  
 "Possessions vanish, and opinions change,  
 And passions hold a fluctuating seat: 70  
 But, by the storms of circumstance un-  
 shaken,  
 And subject neither to eclipse nor wane,  
 Duty exists;—immutably survive,  
 For our support, the measures and the  
 forms,  
 Which an abstract intelligence supplies;  
 Whose kingdom is, where time and space  
 are not. 76  
 Of other converse which mind, soul, and  
 heart,  
 Do, with united urgency, require,  
 What more that may not perish?—Thou,  
 dread source, 79  
 Prime, self-existing cause and end of all  
 That in the scale of being fill their place;  
 Above our human region, or below,  
 Set and sustained;—thou, who didst wrap  
 the cloud  
 Of infancy around us, that thyself,  
 Therein, with our simplicity awhile 85  
 Might'st hold, on earth, communion un-  
 disturbed;  
 Who from the anarchy of dreaming sleep,  
 Or from its death-like void, with punctual  
 care,  
 And touch as gentle as the morning light,  
 Restor'st us, daily, to the powers of sense  
 And reason's steadfast rule—thou, thou  
 alone 91  
 Art everlasting, and the blessed Spirits,  
 Which thou includest, as the sea her  
 waves:  
 For adoration thou endur'st; endure  
 For consciousness the motions of thy  
 will; 95  
 For apprehension those transcendent  
 truths  
 Of the pure intellect, that stand as laws  
 (Submission constituting strength and  
 power)  
 Even to thy Being's infinite majesty!  
 This universe shall pass away—a work 100

Glorious! because the shadow of thy  
might,  
A step, or link, for intercourse with thee.  
Ah! if the time must come, in which my  
feet  
No more shall stray where meditation  
leads,  
By flowing stream, through wood, or  
craggy wild, 105  
Loved haunts like these; the unim-  
prisoned Mind  
May yet have scope to range among her  
own,  
Her thoughts, her images, her high desires.  
If the dear faculty of sight should fail, 109  
Still, it may be allowed me to remember  
What visionary powers of eye and soul  
In youth were mine; when, stationed on  
the top  
Of some huge hill, expectant, I beheld  
The sun rise up, from distant climes  
returned  
Darkness to chase, and sleep; and bring  
the day 115  
His bounteous gift! or saw him toward  
the deep  
Sink, with a retinue of flaming clouds  
Attended; then, my spirit was entranced  
With joy exalted to beatitude;  
The measure of my soul was filled with  
bliss, 120  
And holiest love; as earth, sea, air, with  
light,  
With pomp, with glory, with magnificence!

“Those fervent raptures are for ever  
flown;  
And, since their date, my soul hath under-  
gone 124  
Change manifold, for better or for worse:  
Yet cease I not to struggle, and aspire  
Heavenward; and chide the part of me  
that flags,  
Through sinful choice; or dread necessity  
On human nature from above imposed.  
’Tis, by comparison, an easy task 130  
Earth to despise; but, to converse with  
heaven—<sup>1</sup>  
This is not easy:—to relinquish all

We have, or hope, of happiness and joy,  
And stand in freedom loosened from this  
world,  
I deem not arduous; but must needs  
confess 135  
That ’tis a thing impossible to frame  
Conceptions equal to the soul’s desires;  
And the most difficult of tasks to keep  
Heights which the soul is competent to  
gain.  
—Man is of dust: ethereal hopes are his,  
Which, when they should sustain them-  
selves aloft, 141  
Want due consistence; like a pillar of  
smoke,  
That with majestic energy from earth  
Rises; but, having reached the thinner  
air,  
Melts, and dissolves, and is no longer seen.  
From this infirmity of mortal kind 146  
Sorrow proceeds, which else were not;  
at least,  
If grief be something hallowed and or-  
dained,  
If, in proportion, it be just and meet,  
Yet, through this weakness of the general  
heart, 150  
Is it enabled to maintain its hold  
In that excess which conscience dis-  
approves.  
For who could sink and settle to that  
point  
Of selfishness; so senseless who could be  
As long and perseveringly to mourn 155  
For any object of his love, removed  
From this unstable world, if he could fix  
A satisfying view upon that state  
Of pure, imperishable, blessedness,  
Which reason promises, and holy writ 160  
Ensures to all believers?—Yet mistrust  
Is of such incapacity, methinks,  
No natural branch; despondency far less;  
And, least of all, is absolute despair.  
—And, if there be whose tender frames  
have drooped 165  
Even to the dust; apparently, through  
weight  
Of anguish unrelieved, and lack of power  
An agonizing sorrow to transmute;  
Deem not that proof is here of hope with-  
held

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 927.

When wanted most; a confidence im-  
paired 170

So pitifully, that, having ceased to see  
With bodily eyes, they are borne down  
by love

Of what is lost, and perish through regret.  
Oh! no, the innocent Sufferer often sees  
Too clearly; feels too vividly; and longs  
To realize the vision, with intense 176  
And over-constant yearning;—there—  
there lies

The excess, by which the balance is de-  
stroyed.

Too, too contracted are these walls of  
flesh,

This vital warmth too cold, these visual  
orbs, 180

Though inconceivably endowed, too dim  
For any passion of the soul that leads  
To ecstasy; and all the crooked paths  
Of time and change disdaining, takes its  
course

Along the line of limitless desires. 185

I, speaking now from such disorder free,  
Nor rapt, nor craving, but in settled  
peace,

I cannot doubt that they whom you de-  
plore

Are glorified; or, if they sleep, shall  
wake

From sleep, and dwell with God in end-  
less love. 190

Hope, below this, consists not with be-  
lief

In mercy, carried infinite degrees  
Beyond the tenderness of human hearts:  
Hope, below this, consists not with belief  
In perfect wisdom, guiding mightiest  
power, 195

That finds no limits but her own pure will.

“Here then we rest; not fearing for  
our creed

The worst that human reasoning can  
achieve,

To unsettle or perplex it: yet with pain  
Acknowledging, and grievous self-re-  
proach, 200

That, though immovably convinced, we  
want

Zeal, and the virtue to exist by faith

As soldiers live by courage; as, by  
strength

Of heart, the sailor fights with roaring seas.  
Alas! the endowment of immortal power  
Is matched unequally with custom, time!  
And domineering faculties of sense  
In all; in most with superadded foes,  
Idle temptations; open vanities,  
Ephemeral offspring of the unblushing  
world; 210

And, in the private regions of the mind,  
Ill-governed passions, ranklings of despite,  
Immoderate wishes, pining discontent,  
Distress and care. What then remains?—  
To seek

Those helps for his occasions ever near  
Who lacks not will to use them; vows,  
renewed 216  
On the first motion of a holy thought;  
Vigils of contemplation; praise; and  
prayer—

A stream, which, from the fountain of  
the heart 219

Issuing, however feebly, nowhere flows  
Without access of unexpected strength.  
But, above all, the victory is most sure  
For him, who, seeking faith by virtue,  
strives

To yield entire submission to the law  
Of conscience—conscience revered and  
obeyed, 225

As God's most intimate presence in the  
soul,

And his most perfect image in the world.  
—Endeavour thus to live; these rules  
regard;

These helps solicit; and a steadfast seat  
Shall then be yours among the happy few  
Who dwell on earth, yet breathe empy-  
real air, 231

Sons of the morning. For your nobler  
part,

Ere disencumbered of her mortal chains,  
Doubt shall be quelled and trouble chased  
away;

With only such degree of sadness left 235  
As may support longings of pure desire;  
And strengthen love, rejoicing secretly  
In the sublime attractions of the grave.”

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 927.

While, in this strain, the venerable  
Sage  
Poured forth his aspirations, and announced 240  
His judgments, near that lonely house we  
paced  
A plot of green-sward, seemingly preserved  
By nature's care from wreck of scattered  
stones,  
And from encroachment of encircling  
heath :  
Small space ! but, for reiterated steps,  
Smooth and commodious ; as a stately  
deck 246  
Which to and fro the mariner is used  
To tread for pastime, talking with his  
mates,  
Or haply thinking of far-distant friends,  
While the ship glides before a steady  
breeze. 250  
Stillness prevailed around us : and the  
voice  
That spake was capable to lift the soul  
Toward regions yet more tranquil. But,  
methought,  
That he, whose fixed despondency had  
given  
Impulse and motive to that strong dis-  
course, 255  
Was less upraised in spirit than abashed ;  
Shrinking from admonition, like a man  
Who feels that to exhort is to reproach.  
Yet not to be diverted from his aim,  
The Sage continued :—  
“For that other loss, 260  
The loss of confidence in social man,  
By the unexpected transports of our age  
Carried so high, that every thought,  
which looked  
Beyond the temporal destiny of the Kind,  
To many seemed superfluous—as, no  
cause 265  
Could e'er for such exalted confidence  
Exist ; so, none is now for fixed despair :  
The two extremes are equally disowned  
By reason : if, with sharp recoil, from one  
You have been driven far as its opposite,  
Between them seek the point whereon to  
build 271  
Sound expectations. So doth he advise

Who shared at first the illusion ; but was  
soon  
Cast from the pedestal of pride by shocks  
Which Nature gently gave, in woods and  
fields ; 275  
Nor unreprieved by Providence, thus  
speaking  
To the inattentive children of the world :  
'Vain-glorious Generation ! what new  
powers  
On you have been conferred ? what gifts,  
withheld  
From your progenitors, have ye received,  
Fit recompense of new desert ? what claim  
Are ye prepared to urge, that my decrees  
For you should undergo a sudden change ;  
And the weak functions of one busy day,  
Reclaiming and extirpating, perform 285  
What all the slowly-moving years of time,  
With their united force, have left undone ?  
By nature's gradual processes be taught ;  
By story be confounded ! Ye aspire  
Rashly, to fall once more ; and that false  
fruit, 290  
Which, to your overweening spirits,  
yields  
Hope of a flight celestial, will produce  
Misery and shame. But Wisdom of her  
sons  
Shall not the less, though late, be justi-  
fied.'

“Such timely warning,” said the Wan-  
derer, “gave 295  
That visionary voice ; and, at this day,  
When a Tartarean darkness overspreads  
The groaning nations ; when the impious  
rule,  
By will or by established ordinance,  
Their own dire agents, and constrain the  
good 300  
To acts which they abhor ; though I be-  
wail  
This triumph, yet the pity of my heart  
Prevents me not from owning, that the  
law,  
By which mankind now suffers, is most  
just.  
For by superior energies ; more strict 305  
Affiance in each other ; faith more firm  
In their unhallowed principles ; the bad

Have fairly earned a victory o'er the weak,  
The vacillating, inconsistent good.

Therefore, not unconsoled, I wait—in  
hope 310

To see the moment, when the righteous  
cause

Shall gain defenders zealous and devout  
As they who have opposed her; in which  
Virtue

Will, to her efforts, tolerate no bounds  
That are not lofty as her rights; aspiring  
By impulse of her own ethereal zeal. 316  
That spirit only can redeem mankind;  
And when that sacred spirit shall appear,  
Then shall *our* triumph be complete as  
theirs.

Yet, should this confidence prove vain,  
the wise 320

Have still the keeping of their proper  
peace;

Are guardians of their own tranquillity.  
They act, or they recede, observe, and  
feel;

'Knowing the heart of man is set to be'<sup>1</sup>  
The centre of this world, about the which  
Those revolutions of disturbances 326  
Still roll; where all the aspects of misery  
Predominate; whose strong effects are  
such

As he must bear, being powerless to re-  
dress;

*And that unless above himself he can* 330  
*Erect himself, how poor a thing is man*<sup>2</sup>!'

"Happy is he who lives to understand,  
Not human nature only, but explores  
All natures,—to the end that he may find  
The law that governs each; and where  
begins 335  
The union, the partition where, that  
makes

Kind and degree, among all visible Beings;  
The constitutions, powers, and faculties,  
Which they inherit,—cannot step be-  
yond,— 339

And cannot fall beneath; that do assign  
To every class its station and its office,  
Through all the mighty commonwealth of  
things;

Up from the creeping plant to sovereign  
Man.

Such converse, if directed by a meek,  
Sincere, and humble spirit, teaches love:  
For knowledge is delight; and such de-  
light 346

Breeds love: yet, suited as it rather is  
To thought and to the climbing intellect,  
It teaches less to love, than to adore;  
If that be not indeed the highest love!"

"Yet," said I, tempted here to inter-  
pose, 351

"The dignity of life is not impaired  
By aught that innocently satisfies  
The humbler cravings of the heart; and  
he

Is still a happier man, who, for those  
heights 355

Of speculation not unfit, descends;  
And such benign affections cultivates  
Among the inferior kinds; not merely  
those

That he may call his own, and which de-  
pend,

As individual objects of regard, 360  
Upon his care, from whom he also looks  
For signs and tokens of a mutual bond;  
But others, far beyond this narrow sphere,  
Whom, for the very sake of love, he loves.  
Nor is it a mean praise of rural life 365  
And solitude, that they do favour most,  
Most frequently call forth, and best sus-  
tain,

These pure sensations; that can pene-  
trate

The obstreperous city; on the barren seas  
Are not unfelt; and much might recom-  
mend, 370

How much they might inspirit and en-  
dear,

The loneliness of this sublime retreat!"

"Yes," said the Sage, resuming the dis-  
course

Again directed to his downcast Friend,  
"If, with the froward will and grovelling  
soul 375

Of man, offended, liberty is here,  
And invitation every hour renewed,  
To mark *their* placid state, who never  
heard

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 927.

<sup>2</sup> Daniel.

Of a command which they have power to  
break,

Or rule which they are tempted to trans-  
gress : 380

These with a soothed or elevated heart,  
May we behold ; their knowledge register ;  
Observe their ways ; and, free from envy,  
find

Complacence there :—but wherefore this  
to you ?

I guess that, welcome to your lonely  
hearth, 385

The redbreast, ruffled up by winter's cold  
Into a 'feathery bunch,' feeds at your  
hand :

A box, perchance, is from your casement  
hung

For the small wren to build in ;—not in  
vain, 389

The barriers disregarding that surround  
This deep abiding place, before your sight  
Mounts on the breeze the butterfly ; and  
soars,

Small creature as she is, from earth's  
bright flowers,

Into the dewy clouds. Ambition reigns  
In the waste wilderness : the Soul ascends  
Drawn towards her native firmament of  
heaven, 396

When the fresh eagle, in the month of May,  
Upborne, at evening, on replenished wing,  
This shaded valley leaves ; and leaves the  
dark

Empurpled hills, conspicuously renewing  
A proud communication with the sun 401

Low sunk beneath the horizon !—List !—  
I heard,

From yon huge breast of rock, a voice  
sent forth

As if the visible mountain made the cry.  
Again !"—The effect upon the soul was  
such 405

As he expressed : from out the mountain's  
heart

The solemn voice appeared to issue,  
startling

The blank air—for the region all around  
Stood empty of all shape of life, and silent  
Save for that single cry, the unanswer'd  
bleat 410

Of a poor lamb—left somewhere to itself,

The plaintive spirit of the solitude !  
He paused, as if unwilling to proceed,  
Through consciousness that silence in such  
place

Was best, the most affecting eloquence.  
But soon his thoughts returned upon  
themselves, 416

And, in soft tone of speech, thus he re-  
sumed.

"Ah ! if the heart, too confidently  
raised,

Perchance too lightly occupied, or lulled  
Too easily, despise or overlook 420

The vassalage that binds her to the earth,  
Her sad dependence upon time, and all  
The trepidations of mortality,

What place so destitute and void—but  
there

The little flower her vanity shall check ;  
The trailing worm reprove her thought-  
less pride ? 426

"These craggy regions, these chaotic  
wilds,

Does that benignity pervade, that warms  
The mole contented with her darksome  
walk

In the cold ground ; and to the emmet  
gives 430

Her foresight, and intelligence that makes  
The tiny creatures strong by social league ;  
Supports the generations. multiplies

Their tribes, till we behold a spacious  
plain

Or grassy bottom, all, with little hills—  
Their labour, covered, as a lake with  
waves ; 436

Thousands of cities, in the desert place  
Built up of life, and food, and means of  
life !

Nor wanting here, to entertain the  
thought,

Creatures that in communities exist 440

Less, as might seem, for general guardian-  
ship

Or through dependence upon mutual aid,  
Than by participation of delight

And a strict love of fellowship, combined.  
What other spirit can it be that prompts

The gilded summer flies to mix and weave

Their sports together in the solar beam,  
 Or in the gloom of twilight hum their joy?  
 More obviously the self-same influence  
     rules  
 The feathered kinds; the fieldfare's pen-  
     sive flock, 450  
 The cawing rooks, and sea-mews from  
     afar,  
 Hovering above these inland solitudes,  
 By the rough wind unscattered, at whose  
     call  
 Up through the trenches of the long-  
     drawn vales  
 Their voyage was begun: nor is its power  
 Unfelt among the sedentary fowl 456  
 That seek yon pool, and there prolong  
     their stay  
 In silent congress; or together roused  
 Take flight; while with their clang the  
     air resounds.  
 And, over all, in that ethereal vault, 460  
 Is the mute company of changeeful clouds;  
 Bright apparition, suddenly put forth,  
 The rainbow smiling on the faded storm;  
 The mild assemblage of the starry hea-  
     vens;  
 And the great sun, earth's universal lord!  
  
     "How bountiful is Nature! he shall  
     find 466  
 Who seeks not; and to him, who hath  
     not asked,  
 Large measures shall be dealt. Three  
     sabbath-days  
 Are scarcely told, since, on a service bent  
 Of mere humanity, you clomb those  
     heights; 470  
 And what a marvellous and heavenly  
     show  
 Was suddenly revealed!—the swains  
     moved on,  
 And heeded not: you lingered, you per-  
     ceived  
 And felt, deeply as living man could feel.  
 There is a luxury in self-dispraise; 475  
 And inward self-disparagement affords  
 To meditative spleen a grateful feast.  
 Trust me, pronouncing on your own de-  
     sert,  
 You judge unthankfully: distempered  
     nerves

Infect the thoughts; the languor of the  
     frame 480  
 Depresses the soul's vigour. Quit your  
     couch—  
 Cleave not so fondly to your moody cell;  
 Nor let the hallowed powers, that shed  
     from heaven  
 Stillness and rest, with disapproving eye  
 Look down upon your taper, through  
     a watch 485  
 Of midnight hours, unseasonably twink-  
     ling  
 In this deep Hollow, like a sullen star  
 Dimly reflected in a lonely pool.  
 Take courage, and withdraw yourself  
     from ways  
 That run not parallel to nature's course.  
 Rise with the lark! your matins shall  
     obtain 491  
 Grace, be their composition what it may,  
 If but with hers performed; climb once  
     again,  
 Climb every day, those ramparts; meet  
     the breeze  
 Upon their tops, adventurous as a bee  
 That from your garden thither soars, to  
     feed 496  
 On new-blown heath; let yon command-  
     ing rock  
 Be your frequented watch-tower; roll the  
     stone  
 In thunder down the mountains; with all  
     your might  
 Chase the wild goat; and if the bold red  
     deer 500  
 Fly to those harbours, driven by hound  
     and horn  
 Loud echoing, add your speed to the  
     pursuit;  
 So, wearied to your hut shall you return,  
 And sink at evening into sound repose."

The Solitary lifted toward the hills 505  
 A kindling eye:—accordant feelings  
     rushed  
 Into my bosom, whence these words  
     broke forth:  
 "Oh! what a joy it were, in vigorous  
     health,  
 To have a body (this our vital frame  
 With shrinking sensibility endued, 510

And all the nice regards of flesh and blood)

And to the elements surrender it

As if it were a spirit!—How divine,

The liberty, for frail, for mortal, man 514

To roam at large among unpeopled glens

And mountainous retirements, only trod

By devious footsteps; regions consecrate

To oldest time! and, reckless of the storm

That keeps the raven quiet in her nest,

Be as a presence or a motion—one 520

Among the many there; and while the mists

Flying, and rainy vapours, call out shapes

And phantoms from the crags and solid earth

As fast as a musician scatters sounds

Out of an instrument; and while the streams 525

(As at a first creation and in haste

To exercise their untried faculties)

Descending from the region of the clouds,

And starting from the hollows of the earth

More multitudinous every moment, rend

Their way before them—what a joy to roam 531

An equal among mightiest energies;

And haply sometimes with articulate voice,

Amid the deafening tumult, scarcely heard

By him that utters it, exclaim aloud, 535

'Rage on, ye elements! let moon and stars

Their aspects lend, and mingle in their turn

With this commotion (ruinous though it be)

From day to night, from night to day, prolonged!"

"Yes," said the Wanderer, taking from my lips 540

The strain of transport, "whoso'er in youth

Has, through ambition of his soul, given way

To such desires, and grasped at such delight,

Shall feel congenial stirrings late and long,

In spite of all the weakness that life brings, 545

Its cares and sorrows; he, though taught to own

The tranquillizing power of time, shall wake,

Wake sometimes to a noble restlessness—

Loving the sports which once he gloried in.

"Compatriot, Friend, remote are Gary's hills, 550

The streams far distant of your native glen;

Yet is their form and image here expressed

With brotherly resemblance. Turn your steps

Wherever fancy leads; by day, by night, Are various engines working, not the

same 555

As those with which your soul in youth was moved,

But by the great Artificer endowed

With no inferior power. You dwell alone;

You walk, you live, you speculate alone;

Yet doth remembrance, like a sovereign prince, 560

For you a stately gallery maintain

Of gay or tragic pictures. You have seen,

Have acted, suffered, travelled far, observed

With no incurious eye; and books are yours,

Within whose silent chambers treasure lies 565

Preserved from age to age; more precious far

Than that accumulated store of gold

And orient gems, which, for a day of need,

The Sultan hides deep in ancestral tombs.

These hoards of truth you can unlock at will: 570

And music waits upon your skilful touch,

Sounds which the wandering shepherd from these heights

Hears, and forgets his purpose;—furnish-  
ed thus,  
How can you droop, if willing to be up-  
raised?

“A piteous lot it were to flee from  
Man— 575  
Yet not rejoice in Nature. He, whose  
hours

Are by domestic pleasure uncaressed  
And unenlivened; who exists whole years  
Apart from benefits received or done  
’Mid the transactions of the bustling  
crowd; 580

Who neither hears, nor feels a wish to hear,  
Of the world’s interests—such a one hath  
need

Of a quick fancy and an active heart,  
That, for the day’s consumption, books  
may yield

Food not unwholesome; earth and air  
correct 585

His morbid humour, with delight sup-  
plied

Or solace, varying as the seasons change.  
—Truth has her pleasure-grounds, her  
haunts of ease

And easy contemplation; gay parterres,  
And labyrinthine walks, her sunny  
glades 590

And shady groves in studied contrast—  
each,

For recreation, leading into each:  
These may he range, if willing to partake  
Their soft indulgences, and in due time  
May issue thence, recruited for the tasks  
And course of service Truth requires  
from those 596

Who tend her altars, wait upon her  
throne,

And guard her fortresses. Who thinks,  
and feels,

And recognises ever and anon  
The breeze of nature stirring in his soul,  
Why need such man go desperately  
astray, 601

And nurse ‘the dreadful appetite of  
death?’

If tired with systems, each in its degree  
Substantial, and all crumbling in their  
turn,

Let him build systems of his own, and  
smile 605

At the fond work, demolished with a  
touch;

If unreligious, let him be at once,  
Among ten thousand innocents, enrolled  
A pupil in the many-chambered school,  
Where superstition weaves her airy  
dreams. 610

“Life’s autumn past, I stand on  
winter’s verge;

And daily lose what I desire to keep:  
Yet rather would I instantly decline  
To the traditionary sympathies  
Of a most rustic ignorance, and take 615  
A fearful apprehension from the owl  
Or death-watch: and as readily rejoice,  
If two auspicious magpies crossed my  
way;—

To this would rather bend than see and  
hear

The repetitions wearisome of sense, 620  
Where soul is dead, and feeling hath no  
place;

Where knowledge, ill begun in cold  
remark

On outward things, with formal inference  
ends;

Or, if the mind turn inward, she recoils  
At once—or, not recoiling, is perplexed—  
Lost in a gloom of uninspired research;  
Meanwhile, the heart within the heart,  
the seat 627

Where peace and happy consciousness  
should dwell,

On its own axis restlessly revolving,  
Seeks, yet can nowhere find, the light of  
truth. 630

“Upon the breast of new-created earth  
Man walked; and when and wheresoe’er  
he moved,

Alone or mated, solitude was not.  
He heard, borne on the wind, the articu-  
late voice

Of God; and Angels to his sight ap-  
peared 635

Crowning the glorious hills of paradise;  
Or through the groves gliding like morn-  
ing mist

Enkindled by the sun. He sate—and  
talked  
With winged Messengers; who daily  
brought  
To his small island in the ethereal deep  
Tidings of joy and love.—From those  
pure heights 641  
(Whether of actual vision, sensible  
To sight and feeling, or that in this sort  
Have condescendingly been shadowed  
forth  
Communications spiritually maintained,  
And intuitions moral and divine) 646  
Fell Human-kind—to banishment con-  
demned  
That flowing years repealed not: and  
distress  
And grief spread wide; but Man escaped  
the doom  
Of destitution;—solitude was not. 650  
—Jehovah—shapeless Power above all  
Powers,  
Single and one, the omnipresent God,  
By vocal utterance, or blaze of light,  
Or cloud of darkness, localised in hea-  
ven;  
On earth, enshrined within the wander-  
ing ark; 655  
Or, out of Sion, thundering from his  
throne  
Between the Cherubim—on the chosen  
Race  
Showered miracles, and ceased not to  
dispense  
Judgments, that filled the land from age  
to age  
With hope, and love, and gratitude, and  
fear; 660  
And with amazement smote;—thereby  
to assert  
His scorned, or unacknowledged, sove-  
reignty.  
And when the One, ineffable of name,  
Of nature indivisible, withdrew  
From mortal adoration or regard, 665  
Not then was Deity engulfed; nor Man,  
The rational creature, left, to feel the  
weight  
Of his own reason, without sense or  
thought  
Of higher reason and a purer will,

To benefit and bless, through mightier  
power:— 670  
Whether the Persian—zealous to reject  
Altar and image, and the inclusive walls  
And roofs of temples built by human  
hands—  
To loftiest heights ascending, from their  
tops,  
With myrtle-wreathed tiara on his brow,  
Presented sacrifice to moon and stars, 676  
And to the winds and mother elements,  
And the whole circle of the heavens, for  
him  
A sensitive existence, and a God,  
With lifted hands invoked, and songs of  
praise: 680  
Or, less reluctantly to bonds of sense  
Yielding his soul, the Babylonian framed  
For influence undefined a personal shape;  
And, from the plain, with toil immense,  
upreared  
Tower eight times planted on the top of  
tower, 685  
That Belus, nightly to his splendid couch  
Descending, there might rest; upon that  
height  
Pure and serene, diffused—to overlook  
Winding Euphrates, and the city vast  
Of his devoted worshippers, far-stretched,  
With grove and field and garden inter-  
spersed; 691  
Their town, and foodful region for sup-  
port  
Against the pressure of beleaguering war.  
“Chaldean Shepherds, ranging track-  
less fields, 694  
Beneath the concave of unclouded skies  
Spread like a sea, in boundless solitude,  
Looked on the polar star, as on a guide  
And guardian of their course, that never  
closed  
His steadfast eye. The planetary Five  
With a submissive reverence they be-  
held; 700  
Watched, from the centre of their sleep-  
ing flocks,  
Those radiant Mercuries, that seemed to  
move  
Carrying through ether, in perpetual  
round,

Decrees and resolutions of the Gods ;  
 And, by their aspects, signifying works  
 Of dim futurity, to Man revealed. 706  
 —The imaginative faculty was lord  
 Of observations natural ; and, thus  
 Led on, those shepherds made report of  
     stars  
 In set rotation passing to and fro, 710  
 Between the orbs of our apparent sphere  
 And its invisible counterpart, adorned  
 With answering constellations, under  
     earth,  
 Removed from all approach of living  
     sight  
 But present to the dead ; who, so they  
     deemed, 715  
 Like those celestial messengers beheld  
 All accidents, and judges were of all.

“The lively Grecian, in a land of hills,  
 Rivers and fertile plains, and sounding  
     shores,—

Under a cope of sky more variable, 720  
 Could find commodious place for every  
     God,

Promptly received, as prodigally brought,  
 From the surrounding countries at the  
     choice

Of all adventurers. With unrivalled  
     skill,

As nicest observation furnished hints  
 For studious fancy, his quick hand be-  
     stowed 726

On fluent operations a fixed shape ;  
 Metal or stone, idolatrously served.

And yet—triumphant o’er this pompous  
     show

Of art, this palpable array of sense, 730  
 On every side encountered ; in despite  
 Of the gross fictions chanted in the  
     streets

By wandering Rhapsodists ; and in con-  
     tempt

Of doubt and bold denial hourly urged  
 Amid the wrangling schools—a SPIRIT

    hung, 735  
 Beautiful region ! o’er thy towns and  
     farms,

Statues and temples, and memorial  
     tombs ;

And emanations were perceived ; and acts

Of immortality, in Nature’s course, 739  
 Exemplified by mysteries, that were felt  
 As bonds, on grave philosopher imposed  
 And armed warrior ; and in every grove  
 A gay or pensive tenderness prevailed,  
 When piety more awful had relaxed.

—“Take, running river, take these locks  
     of mine”— 745

Thus would the Votary say—“this sever-  
     ed hair,

My vow fulfilling, do I here present,  
 Thankful for my beloved child’s return.

Thy banks, Cephisus, he again hath trod,  
 Thy murmurs heard ; and drunk the  
     crystallineymph 750

With which thou dost refresh the thirsty  
     lip,

And, all day long, moisten these flowery  
     fields !”

And, doubtless, sometimes, when the  
     hair was shed

Upon the flowing stream, a thought arose  
 Of Life continuous, Being unimpaired ;

That hath been, is, and where it was  
     and is 756

There shall endure,—existence unexposed  
 To the blind walk of mortal accident ;

From diminution safe and weakening  
     age ;

While man grows old, and dwindles, and  
     decays ; 760

And countless generations of mankind  
 Depart ; and leave no vestige where they  
     trod.

“We live by Admiration, Hope, and  
     Love ;

And, even as these are well and wisely  
     fixed,

In dignity of being we ascend. 765  
 But what is error ?”—“Answer he who  
     can !”

The Sceptic somewhat haughtily ex-  
     claimed :

“Love, Hope, and Admiration—are they  
     not

Mad Fancy’s favourite vassals ? Does not  
     life 769

Use them, full oft, as pioneers to ruin,  
 Guides to destruction ? Is it well to trust

Imagination’s light when reason’s fails,

The unguarded taper where the guarded  
faints?

—Stoop from those heights, and soberly  
declare

What error is; and, of our errors, which  
Doth most debase the mind; the genuine  
seats 776

Of power, where are they? Who shall  
regulate,

With truth, the scale of intellectual rank?"

"Methinks," persuasively the Sage re-  
plied, 779

"That for this arduous office you possess  
Some rare advantages. Your early days  
A grateful recollection must supply  
Of much exalted good by Heaven vouch-  
safed

To dignify the humblest state.—Your  
voice

Hath, in my hearing, often testified 785  
That poor men's children, they, and they  
alone,

By their condition taught, can under-  
stand

The wisdom of the prayer that daily asks  
For daily bread. A consciousness is  
yours 789

How feelingly religion may be learned  
In smoky cabins, from a mother's tongue—  
Heard while the dwelling vibrates to the  
din

Of the contiguous torrent, gathering  
strength

At every moment—and, with strength,  
increase 794

Of fury; or, while snow is at the door,  
Assaulting and defending, and the wind,  
A sightless labourer, whistles at his work—  
Fearful; but resignation tempers fear,  
And piety is sweet to infant minds.

—The Shepherd-lad, that in the sunshine  
carves, 800

On the green turf, a dial—to divide  
The silent hours; and who to that report  
Can portion out his pleasures, and adapt,  
Throughout a long and lonely summer's  
day

His round of pastoral duties, is not left 805  
With less intelligence for *moral* things  
Of gravest import. Early he perceives,

Within himself, a measure and a rule,  
Which to the sun of truth he can apply,  
That shines for him, and shines for all  
mankind. 810

Experience daily fixing his regards  
On nature's wants, he knows how few  
they are,  
And where they lie, how answered and  
appeased.

This knowledge ample recompense affords  
For manifold privations; he refers 815  
His notions to this standard; on this rock  
Rests his desires; and hence, in after life,  
Soul-strengthening patience, and sublime  
content.

Imagination—not permitted here  
To waste her powers, as in the worldling's  
mind, 820

On fickle pleasures, and superfluous cares,  
And trivial ostentation—is left free  
And puissant to range the solemn walks  
Of time and nature, girded by a zone  
That, while it binds, invigorates and sup-  
ports. 825

Acknowledge, then, that whether by the  
side

Of his poor hut, or on the mountain-top,  
Or in the cultured field, a Man so bred  
(Take from him what you will upon the  
score

Of ignorance or illusion) lives and breathes  
For noble purposes of mind: his heart 831  
Beats to the heroic song of ancient days;  
His eye distinguishes, his soul creates.  
And those illusions, which excite the scorn  
Or move the pity of unthinking minds,  
Are they not mainly outward ministers  
Of inward conscience? with whose service  
charged 837

They came and go, appeared and dis-  
appear,

Diverting evil purposes, remorse  
Awakening, chastening an intemperate  
grief, 840

Or pride of heart abating: and, when'er  
For less important ends those phantoms  
move,

Who would forbid them, if their presence  
serve,

On thinly-peopled mountains and wild  
heaths,

Filling a space, else vacant, to exalt 845  
The forms of Nature, and enlarge her  
powers?

"Once more to distant ages of the world  
Let us revert, and place before our  
thoughts

The face which rural solitude might wear  
To the unenlightened swains of pagan  
Greece. 850

—In that fair clime, the lonely herdsman,  
stretched

On the soft grass through half a summer's  
day,

With music lulled his indolent repose:  
And, in some fit of weariness, if he,  
When his own breath was silent, chanced  
to hear 855

A distant strain, far sweeter than the  
sounds

Which his poor skill could make, his  
fancy fetched,

Even from the blazing chariot of the sun,  
A beardless Youth, who touched a golden  
lute,

And filled the illumined groves with  
ravishment. 860

The nightly hunter, lifting a bright eye  
Up towards the crescent moon, with  
grateful heart

Called on the lovely wanderer who be-  
stowed

That timely light, to share his joyous  
sport:

And hence, a beaming Goddess with her  
Nymphs, 865

Across the lawn and through the dark-  
some grove,

Not unaccompanied with tuneful notes  
By echo multiplied from rock or cave,

Swept in the storm of chase; as moon and  
stars

Glance rapidly along the clouded heaven,  
When winds are blowing strong. The  
traveller slaked 871

His thirst from rill or gushing fount, and  
thanked

The Naiad. Sunbeams, upon distant hills  
Gliding apace, with shadows in their train,

Might, with small help from fancy, be  
transformed 875

Into fleet Oreads sporting visibly.

The Zephyrs fanning, as they passed,  
their wings,

Lacked not, for love, fair objects whom  
they wooed

With gentle whisper. Withered boughs  
grotesque,

Stripped of their leaves and twigs by  
hoary age, 880

From depth of shaggy covert peeping  
forth

In the low vale, or on steep mountain-side;  
And, sometimes, intermixed with stirring  
horns

Of the live deer, or goat's depending  
beard,—

These were the lurking Satyrs, a wild  
brood 885

Of gamesome Deities; or Pan himself,  
The simple shepherd's awe-inspiring  
God!"

The strain was aptly chosen; and I  
could mark

Its kindly influence, o'er the yielding  
brow

Of our Companion, gradually diffused;  
While, listening, he had paced the noise-  
less turf, 891

Like one whose untired ear a murmuring  
stream

Detains; but tempted now to interpose,  
He with a smile exclaimed:—

"'Tis well you speak  
At a safe distance from our native land,

And from the mansions where our youth  
was taught. 896

The true descendants of those godly men  
Who swept from Scotland, in a flame of  
zeal,

Shrine, altar, image, and the massy piles  
That harboured them,—the souls retaining  
yet 900

The churlish features of that after-race  
Who fled to woods, caverns, and jutting  
rocks,

In deadly scorn of superstitious rites,  
Or what their scruples construed to be  
such—

How, think you, would they tolerate this  
scheme 905

Of fine propensities, that tends, if urged  
 Far as it might be urged, to sow afresh  
 The weeds of Romish phantasy, in vain  
 Uprooted ; would re-consecrate our wells  
 To good Saint Fillan and to fair Saint  
 Anne ; 910  
 And from long banishment recall Saint  
 Giles,  
 To watch again with tutelary love  
 O'er stately Edinburgh throned on  
 crags ?  
 A blessed restoration, to behold  
 The patron, on the shoulders of his priests,  
 Once more parading through her crowded  
 streets 916  
 Now simply guarded by the sober powers  
 Of science, and philosophy, and sense !”

This answer followed.—“You have  
 turned my thoughts  
 Upon our brave Progenitors, who rose  
 Against idolatry with warlike mind, 921  
 And shrunk from vain observances, to  
 lurk  
 In woods, and dwell under impending  
 rocks  
 Ill-sheltered, and oft wanting fire and  
 food ;  
 Why ?—for this very reason that they felt,  
 And did acknowledge, wheresoe'er they  
 moved, 926  
 A spiritual presence, oft-times miscon-  
 ceived,  
 But still a high dependence, a divine  
 Bounty and government, that filled their  
 hearts  
 With joy, and gratitude, and fear, and  
 love ; 930  
 And from their fervent lips drew hymns  
 of praise,  
 That through the desert rang. Though  
 favoured less,  
 Far less, than these, yet such, in their de-  
 gree,  
 Were those bewildered Pagans of old  
 time.  
 Beyond their own poor natures and  
 above 935  
 They looked ; were humbly thankful for  
 the good  
 Which the warm sun solicited, and earth

Bestowed ; were gladsome,—and their  
 moral sense  
 They fortified with reverence for the  
 Gods ;  
 And they had hopes that overstepped the  
 Grave. 940

“Now, shall our great Discoverers,” he  
 exclaimed,  
 Raising his voice triumphantly, “obtain  
 From sense and reason less than these  
 obtained,  
 Though far misled ? Shall men for whom  
 our age  
 Unbaffled powers of vision hath prepared,  
 To explore the world without and world  
 within, 946  
 Be joyless as the blind ? Ambitious  
 spirits—

Whom earth, at this late season, hath  
 produced  
 To regulate the moving spheres, and weigh  
 The planets in the hollow of their hand ;  
 And they who rather dive than soar,  
 whose pains  
 Have solved the elements, or analysed  
 The thinking principle—shall they in fact  
 Prove a degraded Race ? and what avails  
 Renown, if their presumption make them  
 such ? 955  
 Oh ! there is laughter at their work in  
 heaven !

Enquire of ancient Wisdom ; go, demand  
 Of mighty Nature, if 'twas ever meant  
 That we should pry far off yet be un-  
 raised ;

That we should pore, and dwindle as we  
 pore, 960  
 Viewing all objects unremittingly  
 In disconnection dead and spiritless ;  
 And still dividing, and dividing still,  
 Break down all grandeur, still unsatisfied  
 With the perverse attempt, while little-  
 ness 965  
 May yet become more little ; waging thus  
 An impious warfare with the very life  
 Of our own souls !

And if indeed there be  
 An all-pervading Spirit, upon whom  
 Our dark foundations rest, could he de-  
 sign 970

That this magnificent effect of power,  
The earth we tread, the sky that we be-  
hold

By day, and all the pomp which night  
reveals ;

That these—and that superior mystery  
Our vital frame, so fearfully devised, 975  
And the dread soul within it—should  
exist

Only to be examined, pondered, searched,  
Probed, vexed, and criticised?—Accuse  
me not

Of arrogance, unknown Wanderer as I am,  
If, having walked with Nature threescore  
years, 980

And offered, far as frailty would allow,  
My heart a daily sacrifice to Truth,  
I now affirm of Nature and of Truth,  
Whom I have served, that their DIVINITY  
Revolts, offended at the ways of men 985  
Swayed by such motives, to such ends  
employed ;

Philosophers, who, though the human soul  
Be of a thousand faculties composed,  
And twice ten thousand interests, do yet  
prize 989

This soul, and the transcendent universe.  
No more than as a mirror that reflects  
To proud Self-love her own intelligence ;  
That one, poor, finite object, in the abyss  
Of infinite Being, twinkling restlessly !

“Nor higher place can be assigned to him  
And his compeers—the laughing Sage of  
France.— 996

Crowned was he, if my memory do not  
err,

With laurel planted upon hoary hairs,  
In sign of conquest by his wit achieved  
And benefits his wisdom had conferred ;  
His stooping body tottered with wreaths  
of flowers. 1001

Opprest, far less becoming ornaments  
Than Spring oft twines about a moulder-  
ing tree ;

Yet so it pleased a fond, a vain, old Man,  
And a most frivolous people. Him I  
mean 1005

Who penned, to ridicule confiding faith,  
This sorry Legend ; which by chance we  
found

Piled in a nook, through malice, as might  
seem,

Among more innocent rubbish.”—Speak-  
ing thus,

With a brief notice when, and how, and  
where, 1010

We had espied the book, he drew it forth ;  
And courteously, as if the act removed,  
At once, all traces from the good Man's  
heart

Of unbenign aversion or contempt,  
Restored it to its owner. “Gentle  
Friend,” 1015

Herewith he grasped the Solitary's hand,  
“You have known lights and guides  
better than these.

Ah ! let not aught amiss within dispose  
A noble mind to practise on herself, 1019

And tempt opinion to support the wrongs  
Of passion : whatsoe'er be felt or feared,  
From higher judgment-seats make no ap-  
peal

To lower : can you question that the soul  
Inherits an allegiance, not by choice  
To be cast off, upon an oath proposed  
By each new upstart notion ? In the  
ports 1026

Of levity no refuge can be found,  
No shelter, for a spirit in distress.

He, who by wilful disesteem of life  
And proud insensibility to hope, 1030

Affronts the eye of Solitude, shall learn  
That her mild nature can be terrible ;  
That neither she nor Silence lack the  
power

To avenge their own insulted majesty.

“O blest seclusion ! when the mind  
admits 1035

The law of duty ; and can therefore move  
Through each vicissitude of loss and gain,  
Linked in entire complacency with her  
choice ;

When youth's presumptuousness is mel-  
lowed down,

And manhood's vain anxiety dismissed ;  
When wisdom shows her seasonable  
fruit, 1041

Upon the boughs of sheltering leisure  
hung

In sober plenty ; when the spirit stoops

To drink with gratitude the crystal stream  
Of unproved enjoyment; and is  
pleased 1045

To muse, and be saluted by the air  
Of meek repentance, wafting wallflower  
scents

From out the crumbling ruins of fallen  
pride

And chambers of transgression, now for-  
lorn.

O, calm contented days, and peaceful  
nights! 1050

Who, when such good can be obtained,  
would strive

To reconcile his manhood to a couch  
Soft, as may seem, but, under that dis-  
guise,

Stuffed with the thorny substance of the  
past

For fixed annoyance; and full oft be-  
set 1055

With floating dreams, black and dis-  
consolate,

The vapoury phantoms of futurity?

"Within the soul a faculty abides,  
That with interpositions, which would  
hide

And darken, so can deal that they be-  
come 1060

Contingencies of pomp; and serve to  
exalt

Her native brightness. As the ample  
moon,

In the deep stillness of a summer even  
Rising behind a thick and lofty grove,

Burns, like an unconsuming fire of  
light, 1065

In the green trees; and, kindling on all  
sides

Their leafy umbrage, turns the dusky  
veil

Into a substance glorious as her own,  
Yea, with her own incorporated, by  
power

Capacious and serene. Like power  
abides 1070

In man's celestial spirit; virtue thus  
Sets forth and magnifies herself; thus  
feeds

A calm, a beautiful, and silent fire,

From the encumbrances of mortal life,  
From error, disappointment—nay, from  
guilt; 1075  
And sometimes, so relenting justice wills,  
From palpable oppressions of despair."

The Solitary by these words was touched  
With manifest emotion, and exclaimed;  
"But how begin? and whence?—"The  
Mind is free— 1080

Resolve,' the haughty Moralist would  
say,

'This single act is all that we demand.'  
Alas! such wisdom bids a creature fly

Whose very sorrow is, that time hath  
shorn

His natural wings!—To friendship let  
him turn 1085

For succour; but perhaps he sits  
alone

On stormy waters, tossed in a little boat  
That holds but him, and can contain no  
more!

Religion tells of amity sublime  
Which no condition can preclude; of

One 1090  
Who sees all suffering, comprehends all  
wants,

All weakness fathoms, can supply all  
needs:

But is that bounty absolute?—His gifts,  
Are they not, still, in some degree,

rewards  
For acts of service? Can his love ex-  
tend 1095

To hearts that own not him? Will showers  
of grace,

When in the sky no promise may be  
seen,

Fall to refresh a parched and withered  
land?

Or shall the groaning Spirit cast her load  
At the Redeemer's feet?"

In rueful tone, 1100  
With some impatience in his mien, he  
spake:

Back to my mind rushed all that had  
been urged

To calm the Sufferer when his story  
closed;

I looked for counsel as unbending now;

But a discriminating sympathy 1105  
 Stooped to this apt reply :—  
     " As men from men  
 Do, in the constitution of their souls,  
 Differ, by mystery not to be explained;  
 And as we fall by various ways, and sink  
 One deeper than another, self-con-  
     demned 1110  
 Through manifold degrees of guilt and  
     shame;  
 So manifold and various are the ways  
 Of restoration, fashioned to the steps  
 Of all infirmity, and tending all  
 To the same point, attainable by all— 1115  
 Peace in ourselves, and union with our  
     God.  
 For you, assuredly, a hopeful road  
 Lies open: we have heard from you a  
     voice  
 At every moment softened in its course  
 By tenderness of heart; have seen your  
     eye, 1120  
 Even like an altar lit by fire from heaven,  
 Kindle before us.—Your discourse this  
     day,  
 That, like the fabled Lethe, wished to  
     flow  
 In creeping sadness, through oblivious  
     shades  
 Of death and night, has caught at every  
     turn 1125  
 The colours of the sun. Access for  
     you  
 Is yet preserved to principles of truth,  
 Which the imaginative Will upholds  
 In seats of wisdom, not to be approached  
 By the inferior Faculty that moulds, 1130  
 With her minute and speculative pains,  
 Opinion, ever changing !  
     I have seen  
 A curious child, who dwelt upon a tract  
 Of inland ground, applying to his ear  
 The convolutions of a smooth-lipped  
     shell ; 1135  
 To which, in silence hushed, his very soul  
 Listened intently; and his countenance  
     soon  
 Brightened with joy; for from within  
     were heard  
 Murmurings, whereby the monitor ex-  
     pressed

Mysterious union with its native sea. 1140  
 Even such a shell the universe itself  
 Is to the ear of Faith; and there are  
     times,  
 I doubt not, when to you it doth impart  
 Authentic tidings of invisible things;  
 Of ebb and flow, and ever-during  
     power ; 1145  
 And central peace, subsisting at the  
     heart  
 Of endless agitation. Here you stand,  
 Adore, and worship, when you know it  
     not;  
 Pious beyond the intention of your  
     thought;  
 Devout above the meaning of your  
     will. 1150  
 —Yes, you have felt, and may not cease  
     to feel.  
 The estate of man would be indeed forlorn  
 If false conclusions of the reasoning power  
 Made the eye blind, and closed the  
     passages  
 Through which the ear converses with the  
     heart. 1155  
 Has not the soul, the being of your life,  
 Received a shock of awful consciousness,  
 In some calm season, when these lofty  
     rocks  
 At night's approach bring down the un-  
     clouded sky,  
 To rest upon their circumambient  
     walls ; 1160  
 A temple framing of dimensions vast,  
 And yet not too enormous for the sound  
 Of human anthems,—choral song, or burst  
 Sublime of instrumental harmony,  
 To glorify the Eternal ! What if these 1165  
 Did never break the stillness that prevails  
 Here,—if the solemn nightingale be mute,  
 And the soft woodlark here did never  
     chant  
 Her vespers,—Nature fails not to pro-  
     vide  
 Impulse and utterance. The whispering  
     air 1170  
 Sends inspiration from the shadowy  
     heights,  
 And blind recesses of the caverned rocks;  
 The little rills, and waters numberless,  
 Inaudible by daylight, blend their notes

With the loud streams: and often, at the  
hour 1175  
When issue forth the first pale stars, is  
heard,

Within the circuit of this fabric huge,  
One voice—the solitary raven, flying  
Athwart the concave of the dark blue  
dome,

Unseen, perchance above all power of  
sight— 1180

An iron knell! with echoes from afar  
Faint—and still fainter—as the cry, with  
which

The wanderer accompanies her flight  
Through the calm region, fades upon the  
ear.

Diminishing by distance till it seemed  
To expire; yet from the abyss is caught  
again, 1186

And yet again recovered!

But descending  
From these imaginative heights, that  
yield

Far-stretching views into eternity,  
Acknowledge that to Nature's humbler  
power 1190

Your cherished sullenness is forced to  
bend

Even here, where her amenities are  
sown

With sparing hand. Then trust yourself  
abroad

To range her blooming bowers, and spa-  
cious fields,

Where on the labours of the happy  
throng 1195

She smiles, including in her wide em-  
brace

City, and town, and tower,—and sea with  
ships

Sprinkled;—be our Companion while we  
track

Her rivers populous with gliding life;  
While, free as air, o'er printless sands we  
march, 1200

Or pierce the gloom of her majestic  
woods;

Roaming, or resting under grateful shade  
In peace and meditative cheerfulness;

Where living things, and things inani-  
mate,

Do speak, at Heaven's command, to eye  
and ear, 1205

And speak to social reason's inner  
sense,

With inarticulate language.

For, the Man—  
Who, in this spirit, communes with the  
Forms

Of nature, who with understanding heart  
Both knows and loves such objects as  
excite 1210

No morbid passions, no disquietude,  
No vengeance, and no hatred—needs must  
feel

The joy of that pure principle of love  
So deeply, that, unsatisfied with aught  
Less pure and exquisite, he cannot  
choose 1215

But seek for objects of a kindred love  
In fellow-natures and a kindred joy.

Accordingly he by degrees perceives  
His feelings of aversion softened down;

A holy tenderness pervades his frame. 1220  
His sanity of reason not impaired,

Say rather, all his thoughts now flowing  
clear,

From a clear fountain flowing, he looks  
round

And seeks for good; and finds the good  
he seeks:

Until abhorrence and contempt are  
things 1225

He only knows by name; and, if he  
hear,

From other mouths, the language which  
they speak,

He is compassionate; and has no thought,  
No feeling, which can overcome his love.

“And further; by contemplating these  
Forms 1230

In the relations which they bear to  
man,

He shall discern, how, through the various  
means

Which silently they yield, are multiplied  
The spiritual presences of absent things.

Trust me, that for the instructed, time  
will come 1235

When they shall meet no object but may  
teach

Some acceptable lesson to their minds  
Of human suffering, or of human joy.  
So shall they learn, while all things speak  
of man,

Their duties from all forms; and general  
laws, 1240

And local accidents, shall tend alike  
To rouse, to urge; and, with the will,  
confer

The ability to spread the blessings wide  
Of true philanthropy. The light of love  
Not failing, perseverance from their  
steps 1245

Departing not, for them shall be con-  
firmed

The glorious habit by which sense is  
made

Subservient still to moral purposes,  
Auxiliar to divine. That change shall  
clothe

The naked spirit, ceasing to deplore 1250  
The burthen of existence. Science then  
Shall be a precious visitant; and then,  
And only then, be worthy of her name:  
For then her heart shall kindle; her dull  
eye,

Dull and inanimate, no more shall  
hang 1255

Chained to its object in brute slavery;  
But taught with patient interest to watch  
The processes of things, and serve the  
cause

Of order and distinctness, not for this  
Shall it forget that its most noble use,  
Its most illustrious province, must be  
found 1261

In furnishing clear guidance, a support  
Not treacherous, to the mind's *excursive*  
power.

—So build we up the Being that we are;  
Thus deeply drinking-in the soul of  
things, 1265

We shall be wise perforce; and, while  
inspired

By choice, and conscious that the Will is  
free,

Shall move unswerving, even as if im-  
pelled

By strict necessity, along the path  
Of order and of good. Whate'er we  
see, 1270

Or feel, shall tend to quicken and refine;  
Shall fix, in calmer seats of moral strength,  
Earthly desires; and raise, to loftier  
heights  
Of divine love, our intellectual soul."

Here closed the Sage that eloquent  
harangue, 1275  
Poured forth with fervour in continuous  
stream,

Such as, remote, 'mid savage wilderness,  
An Indian Chief discharges from his  
breast

Into the hearing of assembled tribes,  
In open circle seated round, and hushed  
As the unbreathing air, when not a leaf  
Stirs in the mighty woods.—So did he  
speak:

The words he uttered shall not pass  
away

Dispersed, like music that the wind  
takes up

By snatches, and lets fall, to be for-  
gotten; 1285

No—they sank into me, the bounteous gift  
Of one whom time and nature had made  
wise,

Gracing his doctrine with authority  
Which hostile spirits silently allow;  
Of one accustomed to desires that feed  
On fruitage gathered from the tree of  
life; 1291

To hopes on knowledge and experience  
built;

Of one in whom persuasion and belief  
Had ripened into faith, and faith become  
A passionate intuition; whence the  
Soul, 1295

Though bound to earth by ties of pity  
and love,

From all injurious servitude was free.

The Sun, before his place of rest were  
reached,

Had yet to travel far, but unto us,  
To us who stood low in that hollow  
dell, 1300

He had become invisible,—a pomp  
Leaving behind of yellow radiance spread  
Over the mountain-sides, in contrast  
bold

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>With ample shadows, seemingly, no less<br/>         Than those resplendent lights, his rich<br/>             bequest; <span style="float: right;">1305</span><br/>         A dispensation of his evening power.<br/>         —Adown the path that from the glen<br/>             had led<br/>         The funeral train, the Shepherd and his<br/>             Mate<br/>         Were seen descending:—forth to greet<br/>             them ran<br/>         Our little Page: the rustic pair ap-<br/>             proach; <span style="float: right;">1310</span><br/>         And in the Matron's countenance may be<br/>             read<br/>         Plain indication that the words, which<br/>             told<br/>         How that neglected Pensioner was sent</p> | <p>Before his time into a quiet grave,<br/>         Had done to her humanity no wrong: 1315<br/>         But we are kindly welcomed—promptly<br/>             served<br/>         With ostentatious zeal.—Along the floor<br/>         Of the small Cottage in the lonely Dell<br/>         A grateful couch was spread for our<br/>             repose;<br/>         Where, in the guise of mountaineers, we<br/>             lay, <span style="float: right;">1320</span><br/>         Stretched upon fragrant heath, and lulled<br/>             by sound<br/>         Of far-off torrents charming the still<br/>             night,<br/>         And, to tired limbs and over-busy<br/>             thoughts,<br/>         Inviting sleep and soft forgetfulness.</p> |
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## BOOK FIFTH.

### THE PASTOR.

#### ARGUMENT.

Farewell to the Valley.—Reflections.—A large and populous Vale described.—The Pastor's Dwelling, and some account of him.—Church and Monuments.—The Solitary musing, and where.—Roused.—In the Churchyard the Solitary communicates the thoughts which had recently passed through his mind.—Lofty tone of the Wanderer's discourse of yesterday adverted to.—Rite of Baptism, and the professions accompanying it, contrasted with the real state of human life.—Apology for the Rite.—Inconsistency of the best men.—Acknowledgment that practice falls far below the injunctions of duty as existing in the mind.—General complaint of a falling-off in the value of life after the time of youth.—Outward appearances of content and happiness in degree illusive.—Pastor approaches.—Appeal made to him.—His answer.—Wanderer in sympathy with him.—Suggestion that the least ambitious enquirers may be most free from error.—The Pastor is desired to give some portraits of the living or dead from his own observation of life among these Mountains—and for what purpose.—Pastor consents.—Mountain cottage.—Excellent qualities of its Inhabitants.—Solitary expresses his pleasure; but denies the praise of virtue to worth of this kind.—Feelings of the Priest before he enters upon his account of persons interred in the Churchyard.—Graves of unbaptized Infants.—Funeral and sepulchral observances, whence.—Ecclesiastical Establishments, whence derived.—Profession of belief in the doctrine of Immortality.

|  |   |    |
|--|---|----|
| "FAREWELL, deep Valley, with thy one<br>rude House,  | Lingering behind my comrades, thus I<br>breathed  | 14 |
| And its small lot of life-supporting fields,   | A parting tribute to a spot that seemed   |    |
| And guardian rocks!—Farewell, attractive<br>sent!  | Like the fixed centre of a troubled<br>world.   |    |
| To the still influx of the morning light<br>Open, and day's pure cheerfulness, but<br>veiled | Again I halted with reverted eyes;<br>The chain that would not slacken, was at<br>length        | 5  |
| From human observation, as if yet<br>Primeval forests wrapped thee round with<br>dark        | Snapt,—and, pursuing leisurely my way,<br>How vain, thought I, is it by change of<br>place      | 20 |
| Impenetrable shade; once more fare-<br>well,   | To seek that comfort which the mind<br>denies;  |    |
| Majestic circuit, beautiful abyss,<br>By Nature destined from the birth of<br>things         | Yet trial and temptation oft are shun-<br>ned   | 10 |
| For quietness profound!"   | Wisely; and by such tenure do we hold<br>Frail life's possessions, that even they<br>whose fate |    |
| Upon the side<br>Of that brown ridge, sole outlet of the<br>vale                             | Yields no peculiar reason of complaint  | 25 |
| Which foot of boldest stranger would at-<br>tempt,   | Might, by the promise that is here, be<br>won   |    |
|  | To steal from active duties, and embrace  |    |

Obscurity, and undisturbed repose.

—Knowledge, methinks, in these disordered times,

Should be allowed a privilege to have 30

Her anchorites, like piety of old ;

Men, who, from faction sacred, and unstained

By war, might, if so minded, turn aside

Uncensured, and subsist, a scattered few

Living to God and nature, and content

With that communion. Consecrated be

The spots where such abide ! But happier still

The Man, whom, furthermore, a hope attends

That meditation and research may guide

His privacy to principles and powers 40

Discovered or invented ; or set forth,

Through his acquaintance with the ways of truth,

In lucid order ; so that, when his course

Is run, some faithful eulogist may say,

He sought not praise, and praise did overlook 45

His unobtrusive merit ; but his life,

Sweet to himself, was exercised in good

That shall survive his name and memory.

Acknowledgments of gratitude sincere

Accompanied these musings ; fervent thanks 50

For my own peaceful lot and happy choice ;

A choice that from the passions of the world

Withdrew, and fixed me in a still retreat ;

Sheltered, but not to social duties lost,

Secluded, but not buried ; and with song

Cheering my days, and with industrious thought ; 56

With the ever-welcome company of books ;

With virtuous friendship's soul-sustaining aid,

And with the blessings of domestic love.

Thus occupied in mind I paced along,

Following the rugged road, by sledge or wheel 61

Worn in the moorland, till I overtook

My two Associates, in the morning sunshine

Halting together on a rocky knoll,  
Whence the bare road descended rapidly  
To the green meadows of another vale.

Here did our pensive Host put forth his hand 67

In sign of farewell. "Nay," the old Man said,

"The fragrant air its coolness still retains ;

The herds and flocks are yet abroad to crop 70

The dewy grass ; you cannot leave us now,

We must not part at this inviting hour."

He yielded, though reluctant ; for his mind

Instinctively disposed him to retire 74

To his own covert ; as a billow, heaved

Upon the beach, rolls back into the sea.

—So we descend : and winding round a rock

Attain a point that showed the valley—stretched

In length before us ; and, not distant far,

Upon a rising ground a grey church-tower, 80

Whose battlements were screened by tufted trees.

And towards a crystal Mere, that lay beyond

Among steep hills and woods embosomed, flowed

A copious stream with boldly-winding course ;

Here traceable, there hidden—there again

To sight restored, and glittering in the sun. 86

On the stream's bank, and everywhere, appeared

Fair dwellings, single, or in social knots ;

Some scattered o'er the level, others perched

On the hill-sides, a cheerful quiet scene,

Now in its morning purity arrayed. 91

"As 'mid some happy valley of the Alps,"

Said I, "once happy, ere tyrannic power,

Wantonly breaking in upon the Swiss,

Destroyed their unoffending commonwealth, 95

A popular equality reigns here,

Save for yon stately House beneath whose  
 roof  
 A rural lord might dwell."—"No feudal  
 pomp,  
 Or power," replied the Wanderer, "to  
 that House  
 Belongs, but there in his allotted Home  
 Abides, from year to year, a genuine  
 Priest, 101  
 The shepherd of his flock; or, as a king  
 Is styled, when most affectionately praised,  
 The father of his people. Such is he;  
 And rich and poor, and young and old,  
 rejoice 105  
 Under his spiritual sway. He hath vouch-  
 safed  
 To me some portion of a kind regard;  
 And something also of his inner mind  
 Hath he imparted—but I speak of him  
 As he is known to all.  
 The calm delights 110  
 Of unambitious piety he chose,  
 And learning's solid dignity; though born  
 Of knightly race, nor wanting powerful  
 friends.  
 Hither, in prime of manhood, he with-  
 drew  
 From academic bowers. He loved the  
 spot— 115  
 Who does not love his native soil?—he  
 prized  
 The ancient rural character, composed  
 Of simple manners, feelings unsuppress'd  
 And undisguised, and strong and serious  
 thought;  
 A character reflected in himself, 120  
 With such embellishment as well befits  
 His rank and sacred function. This deep  
 vale  
 Winds far in reaches hidden from our  
 sight,  
 And one a turreted manorial hall  
 Adorns, in which the good Man's an-  
 cestors 125  
 Have dwelt through ages—Patrons of  
 this Cure.  
 To them, and to his own judicious pains,  
 The Vicar's dwelling, and the whole do-  
 main,  
 Owes that presiding aspect which might  
 well

Attract your notice; statelier than could  
 else 130  
 Have been bestowed, through course of  
 common chance,  
 On an unwealthy mountain Benefice."  
 This said, oft pausing, we pursued our  
 way;  
 Nor reached the village-churchyard till  
 the sun  
 Travelling at steadier pace than ours, had  
 risen 135  
 Above the summits of the highest hills,  
 And round our path darted oppressive  
 beams.  
 As chanced, the portals of the sacred  
 Pile  
 Stood open; and we entered. On my  
 frame,  
 At such transition from the fervid air, 140  
 A grateful coolness fell, that seemed to  
 strike  
 The heart, in concert with that temperate  
 awe  
 And natural reverence which the place  
 inspired.  
 Not raised in nice proportions was the  
 pile, 144  
 But large and massy; for duration built;  
 With pillars crowded, and the roof up-  
 held  
 By naked rafters intricately crossed,  
 Like leafless underboughs, in some thick  
 wood,  
 All withered by the depth of shade above.  
 Admonitory texts inscribed the walls, 150  
 Each, in its ornamental scroll, enclosed;  
 Each also crowned with winged heads—  
 a pair  
 Of rudely-painted Cherubim. The floor  
 Of nave and aisle, in unpretending guise,  
 Was occupied by oaken benches ranged  
 In seemly rows; the chancel only showed  
 Some vain distinctions, marks of earthly  
 state 157  
 By immemorial privilege allowed;  
 Though with the Encincture's special  
 sanctity  
 But ill according. An heraldic shield,  
 Varying its tincture with the changeful  
 light, 161

Imbued the altar-window ; fixed aloft  
A faded hatchment hung, and one by  
time

Yet undiscoloured. A capacious pew  
Of sculptured oak stood here, with drapery  
lined ; 165

And marble monuments were here displayed

Thronging the walls ; and on the floor  
beneath

Sepulchral stones appeared, with emblems  
graven

And foot-worn epitaphs, and some with  
small

And shining effigies of brass enlaid. 170

The tribute by these various records  
claimed,

Duly we paid, each after each, and read  
The ordinary chronicle of birth,

Office, alliance, and promotion—all  
Ending in dust ; of upright magistrates,

Grave doctors strenuous for the mother-  
church, 176

And uncorrupted senators, alike  
To king and people true. A brazen plate,

Not easily deciphered, told of one  
Whose course of earthly honour was be-  
gun 180

In quality of page among the train  
Of the eighth Henry, when he crossed the  
seas

His royal state to show, and prove his  
strength

In tournament, upon the fields of France.  
Another tablet registered the death, 185

And praised the gallant bearing, of  
a Knight

Tried in the sea-fights of the second  
Charles

Near this brave Knight his Father lay  
entombed ;

And, to the silent language giving voice,  
I read,—how in his manhood's earlier  
day 190

He, 'mid the afflictions of intestine war  
And rightful government subverted, found  
One only solace—that he had espoused  
A virtuous Lady tenderly beloved

For her benign perfections ; and yet  
more 195

Endeared to him, for this, that, in her  
state

Of wedlock richly crowned with Heaven's  
regard,

She with a numerous issue filled his house,  
Who throve, like plants, uninjured by the  
storm

That laid their country waste. No need  
to speak 200

Of less particular notices assigned  
To Youth or Maiden gone before their  
time,

And Matrons and unwedded Sisters old ;  
Whose charity and goodness were re-  
hearsed

In modest panegyric.

"These dim lines, 205  
What would they tell?" said I,—but,  
from the task

Of puzzling out that faded narrative,  
With whisper soft my venerable Friend  
Called me ; and, looking down the dark-  
some aisle,

I saw the Tenant of the lonely vale 210  
Standing apart ; with curved arm reclined  
On the baptismal font ; his pallid face  
Upturned, as if his mind were rapt, or  
lost

In some abstraction ;—gracefully he stood,  
The semblance bearing of a sculptured  
form 215

That leans upon a monumental urn  
In peace, from morn to night, from year  
to year.

Him from that posture did the Sexton  
rouse ;

Who entered, humming carelessly a tune,  
Continuation haply of the notes 220

That had beguiled the work from which  
he came,

With spade and mattock o'er his shoulder  
hung ;

To be deposited, for future need,  
In their appointed place. The pale Re-  
cluse

Withdrew ; and straight we followed,—  
to a spot 225

Where sun and shade were intermixed ;  
for there

A broad oak, stretching forth its leafy arms

From an adjoining pasture, overhung  
Small space of that green churchyard  
with a light

And pleasant awning. On the moss-  
grown wall 230

My ancient Friend and I together took  
Our seats; and thus the Solitary spake,  
Standing before us:—

“Did you note the mien  
Of that self-solaced, easy-hearted churl,  
Death’s hireling, who scoops out his  
neighbour’s grave, 235

Or wraps an old acquaintance up in clay,  
All unconcerned as he would bind a sheaf,  
Or plant a tree. And did you hear his  
voice?

I was abruptly summoned by the sound  
From some affecting images and thoughts,  
Which then were silent; but crave utter-  
ance now. 241

“Much,” he continued, with dejected  
look;

“Much, yesterday, was said in glowing  
phrase

Of our sublime dependencies, and hopes  
For future states of being; and the wings  
Of speculation, joyfully outspread, 246  
Hovered above our destiny on earth:  
But stoop, and place the prospect of the  
soul

In sober contrast with reality,  
And man’s substantial life. If this mute  
earth 250

Of what it holds could speak, and every  
grave

Were as a volume, shut, yet capable  
Of yielding its contents to eye and ear,  
We should recoil, stricken with sorrow  
and shame,

To see disclosed, by such dread proof,  
how ill 255

That which is done accords with what  
is known

To reason, and by conscience is enjoined;  
How idly, how perversely, life’s whole  
course,

To this conclusion, deviates from the line,  
Or of the end stops short, proposed to all  
At her aspiring outset.

Mark the babe 261

Not long accustomed to this breathing  
world;

One that hath barely learned to shape  
a smile,

Though yet irrational of soul, to grasp  
With tiny finger—to let fall a tear; 265

And, as the heavy cloud of sleep dis-  
solves,

To stretch his limbs, bemocking, as might  
seem,

The outward functions of intelligent  
man;

A grave proficient in amusive feats  
Of puppetry, that from the lap declare  
His expectations, and announce his  
claims 271

To that inheritance which millions rue  
That they were ever born to! In due  
time

A day of solemn ceremonial comes;  
When they, who for this Minor host in  
trust 275

Rights that transcend the loftiest herit-  
age

Of mere humanity, present their Charge,  
For this occasion daintily adorned,

At the baptismal font. And when the  
pure

And consecrating element hath cleansed  
The original stain, the child is there  
received 281

Into the second ark, Christ’s church,  
with trust

That he, from wrath redeemed, therein  
shall float

Over the billows of this troublesome  
world

To the fair land of everlasting life. 285

Corrupt affections, covetous desires,  
Are all renounced; high as the thought  
of man

Can carry virtue, virtue is professed;  
A dedication made, a promise given

For due provision to control and guide,  
And unremitting progress to ensure 291

In holiness and truth.”

“You cannot blame,”

Here interposing fervently I said,  
“Rites which attest that Man by nature  
lies

Bedded for good and evil in a gulf 295

Fearfully low; nor will your judgment  
scorn

Those services, whereby attempt is made  
To lift the creature toward that eminence  
On which, now fallen, erewhile in ma-  
jesty

He stood; or if not so, whose top serene  
At least he feels 'tis given him to descry;  
Not without aspirations, evermore 302  
Returning, and injunctions from within  
Doubt to cast off and weariness; in trust  
That what the Soul perceives, if glory  
lost, 305

May be, through pains and persevering  
hope,

Recovered; or, if hitherto unknown,  
Lies within reach, and one day shall be  
gained."

"I blame them not," he calmly answer-  
ed—"no; 309

The outward ritual and established forms  
With which communities of men invest  
These inward feelings, and the aspiring  
vows

To which the lips give public utterance  
Are both a natural process; and by me  
Shall pass uncensured; though the issue  
prove, 315

Bringing from age to age its own re-  
proach,

Incongruous, impotent, and blank.—But,  
oh!

If to be weak is to be wretched—miser-  
able,

As the lost Angel by a human voice  
Hath mournfully pronounced, then, in  
my mind, 320

Far better not to move at all than move  
By impulse sent from such illusive  
power,—

That finds and cannot fasten down; that  
grasps

And is rejoiced, and loses while it  
grasps;

That tempts, emboldens—for a time  
sustains, 325

And then betrays; accuses and inflicts  
Remorseless punishment; and so re-  
treads

The inevitable circle: better far

Than this, to graze the herb in thought-  
less peace,  
By foresight, or remembrance, undis-  
turbed! 330

"Philosophy! and thou more vaunted  
name

Religion! with thy statelier retinue,  
Faith, Hope, and Charity—from the  
visible world

Choose for your emblems whatsoe'er ye  
find

Of safest guidance or of firmest trust—  
The torch, the star, the anchor; nor  
except 336

The cross itself, at whose unconscious  
feet

The generations of mankind have knelt  
Ruefully seized, and shedding bitter  
tears,

And through that conflict seeking rest—  
of you, 340

High-titled Powers, am I constrained to  
ask,

Here standing, with the unvoyageable  
sky

In faint reflection of infinitude  
Stretched overhead, and at my pensive  
feet

A subterraneous magazine of bones, 345  
In whose dark vaults my own shall soon  
be laid,

Where are your triumphs? your dominion  
where?

And in what age admitted and con-  
firmed?

—Not for a happy land do I enquire,  
Island or grove, that hides a blessed few  
Who, with obedience willing and sin-  
cere, 351

To your serene authorities conform;  
But whom, I ask, of individual Souls,  
Have ye withdrawn from passion's crook-  
ed ways,

Inspired, and thoroughly fortified?—If  
the heart 355

Could be inspected to its inmost folds  
By sight undazzled with the glare of  
praise,

Who shall be named—in the resplendent  
line

Of sages, martyrs, confessors—the man  
 Whom the best might of faith, wherever  
     fixed, 360  
 For one day's little compass, has pre-  
     served  
 From painful and discreditable shocks  
 Of contradiction, from some vague desire  
 Culpably cherished, or corrupt relapse  
 To some unsanctioned fear?"

"If this be so, 365

And Man," said I, "be in his noblest  
     shape  
 Thus pitifully infirm; then, he who  
     made,  
 And who shall judge the creature, will  
     forgive.  
 —Yet, in its general tenor, your com-  
     plaint  
 Is all too true; and surely not mis-  
     placed: 370  
 For, from this pregnant spot of ground,  
     such thoughts  
 Rise to the notice of a serious mind  
 By natural exhalation. With the dead  
 In their repose, the living in their mirth,  
 Who can reflect, unmoved, upon the  
     round 375  
 Of smooth and solemnized complacencies,  
 By which, on Christian lands, from age  
     to age  
 Profession mocks performance? Earth is  
     sick,  
 And Heaven is weary, of the hollow  
     words  
 Which States and Kingdoms utter when  
     they talk 380  
 Of truth and justice. Turn to private  
     life  
 And social neighbourhood; look we to  
     ourselves;  
 A light of duty shines on every day  
 For all; and yet how few are warmed or  
     cheered!  
 How few who mingle with their fellow-  
     men 385  
 And still remain self-governed, and apart,  
 Like this our honoured Friend; and  
     thence acquire  
 Right to expect his vigorous decline,  
 That promises to the end a blest old  
     age!"

"Yet," with a smile of triumph thus  
     exclaimed 390  
 The Solitary, "in the life of man,  
 If to the poetry of common speech  
 Faith may be given, we see as in a glass  
 A true reflection of the circling year,  
 With all its seasons. Grant that Spring  
     is there, 395  
 In spite of many a rough untoward blast,  
 Hopeful and promising with buds and  
     flowers;  
 Yet where is glowing Summer's long rich  
     day,  
 That *ought* to follow faithfully expressed?  
 And mellow Autumn, charged with  
     bounteous fruit, 400  
 Where is she imaged? in what favoured  
     clime  
 Her lavish pomp, and ripe magnificence?  
 —Yet, while the better part is missed,  
     the worse  
 In man's autumnal season is set forth  
 With a resemblance not to be denied, 405  
 And that contents him; bowers that  
     hear no more  
 The voice of gladness, less and less supply  
 Of outward sunshine and internal  
     warmth;  
 And, with this change, sharp air and  
     falling leaves, 409  
 Foretelling aged Winter's desolate sway.

"How gay the habitations that bedeck  
 This fertile valley! Not a house but  
     seems  
 To give assurance of content within;  
 Embosomed happiness, and placid love;  
 As if the sunshine of the day were met  
 With answering brightness in the hearts  
     of all 416  
 Who walk this favoured ground. But  
     chance-regards,  
 And notice forced upon incurious ears;  
 These, if these only, acting in despite  
 Of the encomiums by my Friend pro-  
     nounced 420  
 On humble life, forbid the judging mind  
 To trust the smiling aspect of this fair  
 And noiseless commonwealth. The sim-  
     ple race  
 Of mountaineers (by nature's self removed

From foul temptations, and by constant  
care 425

Of a good shepherd tended, as them-  
selves

Do tend their flocks) partake man's  
general lot

With little mitigation. They escape,  
Perchance, the heavier woes of guilt;  
feel not

The tedium of fantastic idleness: 430  
Yet life, as with the multitude, with  
them

Is fashioned like an ill-constructed tale;  
That on the outset wastes its gay desires,  
Its fair adventures, its enlivening hopes,  
And pleasant interests—for the sequel  
leaving 435

Old things repeated with diminished  
grace;

And all the laboured novelties at best  
Imperfect substitutes, whose use and  
power

Evince the want and weakness whence  
they spring."

While in this serious mood we held  
discourse, 440

The reverend Pastor toward the church-  
yard gate

Approached; and, with a mild respectful  
air

Of native cordiality, our Friend  
Advanced to greet him. With a gracious  
mien

Was he received, and mutual joy pre-  
vail'd. 445

Awhile they stood in conference, and I  
guess

That he, who now upon the mossy wall  
Sate by my side, had vanished, if a wish  
Could have transferred him to the flying  
clouds,

Or the least penetrable hiding-place 450  
In his own valley's rocky guardianship.

—For me, I looked upon the pair, well  
pleased:

Nature had framed them both, and both  
were marked

By circumstance, with intermixture fine  
Of contrast and resemblance. To an oak  
Hardy and grand, a weather-beaten oak,

Fresh in the strength and majesty of age,  
One might be likened: flourishing ap-  
peared,

Though somewhat past the fulness of  
his prime,

The other—like a stately sycamore, 460  
That spreads, in gentle pomp, its honied  
shade.

A general greeting was exchanged;  
and soon

The Pastor learned that his approach  
had given

A welcome interruption to discourse  
Grave, and in truth too often sad.—"Is  
Man 465

A child of hope? Do generations press  
On generations, without progress made?  
Halts the individual, ere his hairs be  
grey,

Perforce? Are we a creature in whom  
good

Preponderates, or evil? Doth the will  
Acknowledge reason's law? A living  
power 471

Is virtue, or no better than a name,  
Fleeting as health or beauty, and un-  
sound?

So that the only substance which remains,  
(For thus the tenour of complaint hath  
run) 475

Among so many shadows, are the pains  
And penalties of miserable life,  
Doomed to decay, and then expire in  
dust!

—Our cogitations this way have been  
drawn,

These are the points," the Wanderer said,  
"on which 480

Our inquest turns.—Accord, good Sir!  
the light

Of your experience to dispel this gloom:  
By your persuasive wisdom shall the  
heart

That frets, or languishes, be stilled and  
cheered."

"Our nature," said the Priest, in mild  
reply, 485

"Angels may weigh and fathom: they  
perceive,

With undistempered and unclouded spirit,

The object as it is; but, for ourselves,  
That speculative height *we* may not reach.  
The good and evil are our own; and we  
Are that which we would contemplate  
from far. 491

Knowledge, for us, is difficult to gain—  
Is difficult to gain, and hard to keep—  
As virtue's self; like virtue is beset  
With snares; tried, tempted, subject to  
decay. 495

Love, admiration, fear, desire, and hate,  
Blind were we without these: through  
these alone

Are capable to notice or discern  
Or to record; we judge, but cannot be  
Indifferent judges. 'Spite of proudest  
boast, 500

Reason, best reason, is to imperfect man  
An effort only, and a noble aim;  
A crown, an attribute of sovereign power,  
Still to be courted—never to be won.

—Look forth, or each man dive into  
himself; 505

What sees he but a creature too per-  
turbed;

That is transported to excess; that  
yearns,

Regrets, or trembles, wrongly, or too  
much;

Hopes rashly, in disgust as rash recoils;  
Battens on spleen, or moulders in de-  
spair? 510

Thus comprehension fails, and truth is  
missed;

Thus darkness and delusion round our  
path

Spread, from disease, whose subtle injury  
lurks

Within the very faculty of sight. 514

“Yet for the general purposes of faith  
In Providence, for solace and support,  
We may not doubt that who can best  
subject

The will to reason's law, can strictliest  
live

And act in that obedience, he shall gain  
The clearest apprehension of those  
truths, 520

Which unassisted reason's utmost power  
Is too infirm to reach. But, waiving this,  
And our regards confining within bounds  
Of less exalted consciousness, through  
which

The very multitude are free to range, 525  
We safely may affirm that human life

Is either fair and tempting, a soft scene  
Grateful to sight, refreshing to the soul,  
Or a forbidding tract of cheerless  
view;

Even as the same is looked at, or ap-  
proached. 530

Thus, when in changeful April fields are  
white

With new-fallen snow, if from the  
sullen north

Your walk conduct you hither, ere the  
sun

Hath gained his noontide height, this  
churchyard, filled

With mounds transversely lying side by  
side 535

From east to west, before you will ap-  
pear

An unilluminated, blank, and dreary, plain,  
With more than wintry cheerlessness and  
gloom

Saddening the heart. Go forward, and  
look back;

Look, from the quarter whence the lord  
of light, 540

Of life, of love, and gladness doth dis-  
pense

His beams; which, unexcluded in their  
fall,

Upon the southern side of every grave  
Have gently exercised a melting power;

Then will a vernal prospect greet your  
eye, 545

All fresh and beautiful, and green and  
bright,

Hopeful and cheerful:—vanished is the  
pall

That overspread and chilled the sacred  
turf,

Vanished or hidden; and the whole  
domain,

To some, too lightly minded, might ap-  
pear 550

A meadow carpet for the dancing hours.

—This contrast, not unsuitable to life,  
Is to that other state more apposite,  
Death and its two-fold aspect! wintry—  
one,  
Cold, sullen, blank, from hope and joy  
shut out; 555  
The other, which the ray divine hath  
touched,  
Replete with vivid promise, bright as  
spring."

"We see, then, as we feel," the Wanderer thus

With a complacent animation spake,  
"And in your judgment, Sir! the mind's  
repose 560

On evidence is not to be ensured  
By act of naked reason. Moral truth  
Is no mechanic structure, built by rule;  
And which, once built, retains a steadfast  
shape

And undisturbed proportions; but a  
thing. 565

Subject, you deem, to vital accidents;  
And, like the water-lily, lives and thrives,  
Whose root is fixed in stable earth, whose  
head

Floats on the tossing waves. With joy  
sincere

I re-salute these sentiments confirmed 570  
By your authority. But how acquire  
The inward principle that gives effect  
To outward argument; the passive will  
Meek to admit; the active energy,  
Strong and unbounded to embrace, and  
firm 575

To keep and cherish? how shall man  
unite

With self-forgetting tenderness of heart  
An earth-despising dignity of soul?  
Wise in that union, and without it  
blind!"

"The way," said I, "to court, if not  
obtain 580

The ingenuous mind, apt to be set  
aright;

This, in the lonely dell discoursing, you  
Declared at large; and by what exercise

From visible nature, or the inner self

Power may be trained, and renovation  
brought 585

To those who need the gift. But, after  
all,

Is aught so certain as that man is  
doomed

To breathe beneath a vault of ignorance?  
The natural roof of that dark house in  
which

His soul is pent! How little can be  
known— 590

This is the wise man's sigh; how far we  
err—

This is the good man's not unfrequent  
pang!

And they perhaps err least, the lowly  
class

Whom a benign necessity compels 594  
To follow reason's least ambitious course;

Such do I mean who, unperplexed by  
doubt,

And unincited by a wish to look  
Into high objects farther than they may,  
Pace to and fro, from morn till eventide,  
The narrow avenue of daily toil 600  
For daily bread."

"Yes," buoyantly exclaimed  
The pale Recluse—"praise to the sturdy  
plough,

And patient spade; praise to the simple  
crook,

And ponderous loom—resounding while  
it holds

Body and mind in one captivity; 605  
And let the light mechanic tool be hailed

With honour; which, encasing by the  
power

Of long companionship, the artist's hand,  
Cuts off that hand, with all its world of  
nerves,

From a too busy commerce with the  
heart! 610

—Inglorious implements of craft and toil,  
Both ye that shape and build, and ye  
that force,

By slow solicitation, earth to yield  
Her annual bounty, sparingly dealt forth

With wise reluctance; you would I extol,  
Not for gross good alone which ye pro-

duce, 616  
But for the impertinent and ceaseless strife

Of proofs and reasons ye preclude—in  
those  
Who to your dull society are born,  
And with their humble birthright rest  
content. 620  
—Would I had ne'er renounced it!"  
A slight flush  
Of moral anger previously had tinged  
The old Man's cheek; but, at this closing  
turn  
Of self-reproach, it passed away. Said he,  
"That which we feel we utter; as we  
think 625  
So have we argued; reaping for our pains  
No visible recompense. For our relief  
You," to the Pastor turning thus he  
spake,  
"Have kindly interposed. May I entreat  
Your further help? The mine of real  
life 630  
Dig for us; and present us, in the shape  
Of virgin ore, that gold which we, by  
pains  
Fruitless as those of aery alchemists,  
Seek from the torturing crucible. There  
lies  
Around us a domain where you have long  
Watched both the outward course and  
inner heart: 636  
Give us, for our abstractions, solid facts;  
For our disputes, plain pictures. Say  
what man  
He is who cultivates yon hanging field;  
What qualities of mind she bears, who  
comes, 640  
For morn and evening service, with her  
pail,  
To that green pasture; place before our  
sight  
The family who dwell within yon house  
Fenced round with glittering laurel; or  
in that  
Below, from which the curling smoke  
ascends. 645  
Or rather, as we stand on holy earth<sup>1</sup>,  
And have the dead around us, take from  
them  
Your instances; for they are both best  
known.

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 927.

And by frail man most equitably judged,  
Epitomise the life; pronounce, you can,  
Authentic epitaphs on some of these 651  
Who, from their lowly mansions hither  
brought,  
Beneath this turf lie mouldering at our  
feet:  
So, by your records, may our doubts be  
solved;  
And so, not searching higher, we may learn  
*To prize the breath we share with human  
kind;* 656  
*And look upon the dust of man with awe."*

The Priest replied—"An office you  
impose  
For which peculiar requisites are mine;  
Yet much, I feel, is wanting—else the  
task 660  
Would be most grateful. True indeed it is  
That they whom death has hidden from  
our sight  
Are worthiest of the mind's regard; with  
these  
The future cannot contradict the past:  
Mortality's last exercise and proof 665  
Is undergone; the transit made that shows  
The very Soul, revealed as she departs.  
Yet, on your first suggestion, will I give,  
Ere we descend into these silent vaults,  
One picture from the living.

You behold, 670  
High on the breast of yon dark moun-  
tain, dark  
With stony barrenness, a shining speck  
Bright as a sunbeam sleeping till a shower  
Brush it away, or cloud pass over it;  
And such it might be deemed—a sleeping  
sunbeam; 675  
But 'tis a plot of cultivated ground,  
Cut off, an island in the dusky waste;  
And that attractive brightness is its own.  
The lofty site, by nature framed to  
tempt  
Amid a wilderness of rocks and stones  
The tiller's hand, a hermit might have  
chosen, 681  
For opportunity presented, thence  
Far forth to send his wandering eye o'er  
land  
And ocean, and look down upon the works,

The habitations, and the ways of men,  
Himself unseen ! But no tradition tells  
That ever hermit dipped his maple dish  
In the sweet spring that lurks 'mid yon  
green fields ;

And no such visionary views belong 689  
To those who occupy and till the ground,  
High on that mountain where they long  
have dwelt

A wedded pair in childless solitude.  
A house of stones collected on the spot,  
By rude hands built, with rocky knolls  
in front,

Backed also by a ledge of rock, whose  
crest 695  
Of birch-trees waves over the chimney-  
top ;

A rough abode—in colour, shape, and size,  
Such as in unsafe times of border-war  
Might have been wished for and con-  
trived, to elude

The eye of roving plunderer—for their  
need 700  
Suffices ; and unshaken bears the assault  
Of their most dreaded foe, the strong  
South-west

In anger blowing from the distant sea.  
—Alone within her solitary hut ; 704  
There, or within the compass of her fields,  
At any moment may the Dame be found,  
True as the stock-dove to her shallow  
nest

And to the grove that holds it. She  
beguiles

By intermingled work of house and field  
The summer's day, and winter's ; with  
success 710

Not equal, but sufficient to maintain,  
Even at the worst, a smooth stream of  
content,

Until the expected hour at which her  
Mate

From the far-distant quarry's vault re-  
turns ;

And by his converse crowns a silent day  
With evening cheerfulness. In powers of  
mind, 716

In scale of culture, few among my flock  
Hold lower rank than this sequestered  
pair :

But true humility descends from heaven ;

And that best gift of heaven hath fallen  
on them ; 720

Abundant recompense for every want.  
—Stoop from your height, ye proud, and  
copy these !

Who, in their noiseless dwelling-place,  
can hear

The voice of wisdom whispering scripture  
texts

For the mind's government, or temper's  
peace ; 725

And recommending for their mutual need,  
Forgiveness, patience, hope, and charity !”

“Much was I pleased,” the grey-haired  
Wanderer said,

“When to those shining fields our notice  
first

You turned ; and yet more pleased have  
from your lips 730

Gathered this fair report of them who  
dwell

In that retirement ; whither, by such  
course

Of evil hap and good as oft awaits  
A tired way-faring man, once I was  
brought

While traversing alone yon mountain-pass.  
Dark on my road the autumnal evening  
fell, 736

And night succeeded with unusual gloom,  
So hazardous that feet and hands be-  
came

Guides better than mine eyes—until a  
light

High in the gloom appeared, too high,  
methought, 740

For human habitation ; but I longed  
To reach it, destitute of other hope.

I looked with steadiness as sailors look  
On the north star, or watch-tower's dis-  
tant lamp,

And saw the light—now fixed—and  
shifting now— 745

Not like a dancing meteor, but in line  
Of never-varying motion, to and fro.

It is no night-fire of the naked hills,  
Thought I—some friendly covert must be  
near.

With this persuasion thitherward my  
steps. 750

I turn, and reach at last the guiding light;  
Joy to myself! but to the heart of her  
Who there was standing on the open hill,  
(The same kind Matron whom your  
tongue hath praised)

Alarm and disappointment! The alarm  
Ceased, when she learned through what  
mishap I came, 756  
And by what help had gained those distant fields.

Drawn from her cottage, on that airy  
height,

Bearing a lantern in her hand she stood,  
Or paced the ground—to guide her Husband home, 760

By that unwearied signal, kenned afar;  
An anxious duty! which the lofty site,  
Traversed but by a few irregular paths,  
Imposes, whensoever untoward chance 764  
Detains him after his accustomed hour  
Till night lies black upon the ground.

'But come,  
Come,' said the Matron, 'to our poor  
abode;

Those dark rocks hide it!' Entering, I  
beheld

A blazing fire—beside a cleanly hearth  
Sate down; and to her office, with leave  
asked, 770

The Dame returned.

Or ere that glowing pile  
Of mountain turf required the builder's  
hand

Its wasted splendour to repair, the door  
Opened, and she re-entered with glad  
looks,

Her Helpmate following. Hospitable fare,  
Frank conversation, made the evening's  
treat: 776

Need a bewildered traveller wish for  
more?

But more was given; I studied as we sate  
By the bright fire, the good Man's form,  
and face

Not less than beautiful; an open brow 780  
Of undisturbed humanity; a cheek  
Suffused with something of a feminine hue;  
Eyes beaming courtesy and mild regard;  
But, in the quicker turns of the discourse,  
Expression slowly varying, that evinced  
A tardy apprehension. From a fount 786

Lost, thought I, in the obscurities of time,  
But honoured once, those features and  
that mien

May have descended, though I see them  
here.

In such a man, so gentle and subdued, 790  
Withal so graceful in his gentleness,  
A race illustrious for heroic deeds,  
Humbled, but not degraded, may expire.  
This pleasing fancy (cherished and upheld  
By sundry recollections of such fall 795  
From high to low, ascent from low to high,  
As books record, and even the careless  
mind

Cannot but notice among men and things)  
Went with me to the place of my repose.

"Roused by the crowing cock at dawn  
of day, 800

I yet had risen too late to interchange  
A morning salutation with my Host,  
Gone forth already to the far-off seat  
Of his day's work. 'Three dark mid-  
winter months

Pass,' said the Matron, 'and I never see,  
Save when the sabbath brings its kind  
release, 806

My helpmate's face by light of day. He  
quits

His door in darkness, nor till dusk returns.  
And, through Heaven's blessing, thus we  
gain the bread

For which we pray; and for the wants  
provide 810

Of sickness, accident, and helpless age.  
Companions have I many; many friends,  
Dependants, comforters—my wheel, my  
fire,

All day the house-clock ticking in mine ear,  
The cackling hen, the tender chicken  
brood, 815

And the wild birds that gather round my  
porch.

This honest sheep-dog's countenance I  
read;

With him can talk; nor blush to waste a  
word

On creatures less intelligent and shrewd.  
And if the blustering wind that drives the  
clouds 820

Care not for me, he lingers round my door,

And makes me pastime when our tempers  
suit;—

But, above all, my thoughts are my  
support,

My comfort:—would that they were  
oftener fixed

On what, for guidance in the way that  
leads

To heaven, I know, by my Redeemer  
taught.

The Matron ended—nor could I forbear  
To exclaim—‘O happy! yielding to the  
law

Of these privations, richer in the main!—  
While thankless thousands, are oppress  
and clogged

By ease and leisure; by the very wealth  
And pride of opportunity made poor;

While tens of thousands falter in their path,  
And sink, through utter want of cheering  
light;

For you the hours of labour do not flag;  
For you each evening hath its shining star,  
And every sabbath-day its golden sun.”

“Yes!” said the Solitary with a smile  
That seemed to break from an expanding  
heart,

“The untutored bird may found, and so  
construct,

And with such soft materials line, her nest  
Fixed in the centre of a prickly brake,  
That the thorns wound her not; they  
only guard.

Powers not unjustly likened to those gifts  
Of happy instinct which the woodland bird  
Shares with her species, nature’s grace  
sometimes

Upon the individual doth confer,  
Among her, higher creatures born and  
trained

To use of reason. And, I own that, tired  
Of the ostentatious world—a swelling  
stage

With empty actions and vain passions  
stuffed,

And from the private struggles of man-  
kind

Hoping far less than I could wish to hope,  
Far less than once I trusted and be-  
lieved—

I love to hear of those, who, not contend-  
ing

Nor summoned to contend for virtue’s  
prize,

Miss not the humbler good at which they  
aim,

Blest with a kindly faculty to blunt  
The edge of adverse circumstance, and turn  
Into their contraries the petty plagues  
And hindrances with which they stand  
beset.

In early youth, among my native hills,  
I knew a Scottish Peasant who possessed  
A few small crofts of stone-encumbered  
ground;

Masses of every shape and size, that lay  
Scattered about under the mouldering  
walls

Of a rough precipice; and some, apart,  
In quarters unobnoxious to such chance,  
As if the moon had showered them down  
in spite.

But he repined not. Though the plough  
was scared

By these obstructions, ‘round the shady  
stones

A fertilising moisture,’ said the Swain,  
‘Gathers, and is preserved; and feeding  
dews

And damps, through all the drouthy  
summer day

From out their substance issuing, main-  
tain

Herbage that never fails: no grass springs  
up

So green, so fresh, so plentiful, as mine!’  
But thinly sown these natures; rare, at  
least,

The mutual aptitude of seed and soil  
That yields such kindly product. He,  
whose bed

Perhaps yon loose sods cover, the poor  
Pensioner

Brought yesterday from our sequestered  
dell

Here to lie down in lasting quiet, he,  
If living now, could otherwise report

Of rustic loneliness: that grey-haired  
Orphan—

So call him, for humanity to him  
No parent was—feelingly could have told,

In life, in death, what solitude can breed  
Of selfishness, and cruelty, and vice;  
Or, if it breed not, hath not power to cure.  
—But your compliance, Sir! with our  
request 891  
My words too long have hindered.”

Undeterred,  
Perhaps incited rather, by these shocks,  
In no ungracious opposition given  
To the confiding spirit of his own 895  
Experienced faith, the reverend Pastor  
said,  
Around him looking; “Where shall I  
begin?  
Who shall be first selected from my flock  
Gathered together in their peaceful fold?”  
He paused—and having lifted up his eyes  
To the pure heaven, he cast them down  
again 901  
Upon the earth beneath his feet; and  
spake:—

“To a mysteriously-united pair  
This place is consecrate; to Death and  
Life,  
And to the best affections that proceed  
From their conjunction; consecrate to  
faith 906  
In him who bled for man upon the cross;  
Hallowed to revelation; and no less  
To reason’s mandates; and the hopes  
divine  
Of pure imagination;—above all, 910  
To charity, and love, that have provided,  
Within these precincts, a capacious bed  
And receptacle, open to the good  
And evil, to the just and the unjust; 914  
In which they find an equal resting-place:  
Even as the multitude of kindred brooks  
And streams, whose murmur fills this  
hollow vale,  
Whether their course be turbulent or  
smooth, 918  
Their waters clear or sullied, all are lost  
Within the bosom of yon crystal Lake,  
And end their journey in the same repose!

“And blest are they who sleep; and  
we that know,  
While in a spot like this we breathe and  
walk,

That all beneath us by the wings are  
covered  
Of motherly humanity, outspread 925  
And gathering all within their tenders shade,  
Though loth and slow to come! A battle-  
field,  
In stillness left when slaughter’s no more,  
With this compared, makes a strange  
spectacle!  
A dismal prospect yields the wild shore  
strewn 930  
With wrecks, and trod by feet of young  
and old  
Wandering about in miserable search  
Of friends or kindred, whom the angry sea  
Restores not to their prayer! Ah! who  
would think  
That all the scattered subjects which  
compose 935  
Earth’s melancholy vision through the  
space  
Of all her climes—these wretched, these  
depraved,  
To virtue lost, insensible of peace,  
From the delights of charity cut off, 939  
To pity dead, the oppressor and the oppressed;  
Tyrants who utter the destroying word,  
And slaves who will consent to be de-  
stroyed—  
Were of one species with the sheltered few,  
Who, with a dutiful and tender hand,  
Lodged, in a dear appropriated spot, 945  
This file of infants; some that never  
breathed  
The vital air; others, which, though allowed  
That privilege, did yet expire too soon,  
Or with too brief a warning, to admit  
Administration of the holy rite 950  
That lovingly consigns the babe to the arms  
Of Jesus, and his everlasting care.  
These that in trembling hope are laid apart;  
And the besprinkled nursling, unrequired  
Till he begins to smile upon the breast  
That feeds him; and the tottering little-  
one 956  
Taken from air and sunshine when the rose  
Of infancy first blooms upon his cheek;  
The thinking, thoughtless, school-boy;  
the bold youth  
Of soul impetuous, and the bashful maid  
Smitten while all the promises of life 961

Are opening round her; those of middle age,  
Cast down while confident in strength  
they stand,

Like pillars fixed more firmly, as might  
seem,

And more secure, by very weight of all  
That, for support, rests on them; the  
decayed 966

And burthensome; and lastly, that poor  
few

Whose light of reason is with age extinct;  
The hopeful and the hopeless, first and last,  
The earliest summoned and the longest  
spared— 970

Are here deposited, with tribute paid  
Various, but unto each some tribute paid;  
As if, amid these peaceful hills and groves,  
Society were touched with kind concern,  
And gentle 'Nature grieved, that one  
should die!,' 975

Or, if the change demanded no regret,  
Observed the liberating stroke—and  
blessed.

"And whence that tribute? wherefore  
these regards?

Not from the naked *Heart* alone of Man  
(Though claiming high distinction upon  
earth 980

As the sole spring and fountain-head of  
tears,

His own peculiar utterance for distress  
Or gladness)—No," the philosophic Priest  
Continued, "'tis not in the vital seat  
Of feeling to produce them, without aid  
From the pure soul, the soul sublime and  
pure; 986

With her two faculties of eye and ear,

The one by which a creature, whom his sins  
Have rendered prone, can upward look  
to heaven; 989

The other that empowers him to perceive  
The voice of Deity, on height and plain,  
Whispering those truths in stillness, which  
the WORD,

To the four quarters of the winds, pro-  
claims.

Not without such assistance could the use  
Of these benign observances prevail: 995  
Thus are they born, thus fostered, thus  
maintained;

And by the care prospective of our wise  
Forefathers, who, to guard against the  
shocks,

The fluctuation and decay of things,  
Embodied and established these high  
truths 1000

In solemn institutions:—men convinced

That life is love and immortality,

The being one, and one the element.

There lies the channel, and original bed,

From the beginning, hollowed out and  
scooped 1005

For Man's affections—else betrayed and  
lost,

And swallowed up 'mid deserts infinite!

This is the genuine course, the aim, and  
end

Of prescient reason: all conclusions else  
Are abject, vain, presumptuous, and per-  
verse. 1010

The faith partaking of those holy times,

Life, I repeat, is energy of love

Divine or human; exercised in pain,

In strife, in tribulation; and ordained,

If so approved and sanctified, to pass,

Through shades and silent rest, to endless  
joy." 1016

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 923.

## BOOK SIXTH.

### THE CHURCHYARD AMONG THE MOUNTAINS.

#### ARGUMENT.

Poet's Address to the State and Church of England.—The Pastor not inferior to the ancient Worthies of the Church.—He begins his Narratives with an instance of unrequited Love.—Anguish of mind subdued, and how.—The lonely Miner.—An instance of perseverance.—Which leads by contrast to an example of abused talents, irresolution, and weakness.—Solitary, applying this covertly to his own case, asks for an instance of some Stranger, whose dispositions may have led him to end his days here.—Pastor, in answer, gives an account of the harmonising influence of Solitude upon two men of opposite principles, who had encountered agitations in public life.—The rule by which Peace may be obtained expressed, and where.—Solitary hints at an overpowering Fatality.—Answer of the Pastor.—What subjects he will exclude from his Narratives.—Conversation upon this.—Instance of an unamiable character, a Female, and why given.—Contrasted with this, a meek sufferer, from unguarded and betrayed love.—Instance of heavier guilt, and its consequences to the Offender.—With this instance of a Marriage Contract broken is contrasted one of a Widower, evidencing his faithful affection towards his deceased wife by his care of their female Children.

HAIL to the crown by Freedom shaped—to  
gird

An English Sovereign's brow ! and to the  
throne

Whereon he sits ! Whose deep foundations  
lie

In veneration and the people's love ;  
Whose steps are equity, whose seat is  
law.

—Hail to the State of England ! And  
conjoin

With this a salutation as devout,  
Made to the spiritual fabric of her  
Church ;

Founded in truth ; by blood of Martyrdom  
Cemented ; by the hands of Wisdom  
reared

In beauty of holiness, with ordered pomp,  
Decent and unproved. The voice, that  
greet

The majesty of both, shall pray for  
both ;

That, mutually protected and sustained,  
They may endure long as the sea sur-  
rounds

This favoured Land, or sunshine warms  
her soil.

And O, ye swelling hills, and spacious  
plains !

Besprent from shore to shore with steeple-  
towers,

And spires whose " silent finger points to  
heaven<sup>1</sup> ; "

Nor wanting, at wide intervals, the bulk  
Of ancient minster lifted above the cloud  
Of the dense air, which town or city  
breeds

To intercept the sun's glad beams—may  
ne'er

That true succession fail of English  
hearts,

Who, with ancestral feeling, can perceive  
What in those holy structures ye possess  
Of ornamental interest, and the charm  
Of pious sentiment diffused afar,  
And human charity, and social love.

—Thus never shall the indignities of time  
Approach their reverend graces, un-  
opposed ;

Nor shall the elements be free to hurt  
Their fair proportions ; nor the blindness  
Of bigot zeal madly to overturn ;

And, if the desolating hand of war  
Spare them, they shall continue to bestow,  
Upon the thronged abodes of busy men  
(Depraved, and ever prone to fill the mind  
Exclusively with transitory things)

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 933.

An air and mien of dignified pursuit ; 40  
Of sweet civility, on rustic wilds.

The Poet, fostering for his native land  
Such hope, entreats that servants may  
abound

Of those pure altars worthy ; ministers  
Detached from pleasure, to the love of  
gain 45

Superior, insusceptible of pride,  
And by ambitious longings undisturbed ;  
Men, whose delight is where their duty  
leads

Or fixes them ; whose least distinguished  
day

Shines with some portion of that heavenly  
lustre 50

Which makes the sabbath lovely in the  
sight

Of blessed angels, pitying human cares.  
—And, as on earth it is the doom of truth  
To be perpetually attacked by foes

Open or covert, be that priesthood still,  
For her defence, replenished with a band  
Of strenuous champions, in scholastic arts

Thoroughly disciplined ; nor (if in course  
Of the revolving world's disturbances  
Cause should recur, which righteous  
Heaven avert ! 60

To meet such trial) from their spiritual  
sires

Degenerate ; who, constrained to wield  
the sword

Of disputation, shrunk not, though as-  
sailed

With hostile din, and combating in sight  
Of angry umpires, partial and unjust ; 65  
And did, thereafter, bathe their hands in  
fire,

So to declare the conscience satisfied :  
Nor for their bodies would accept release ;  
But, blessing God and praising him, be-  
queathed

With their last breath, from out the  
smouldering flame, 70

The faith which they by diligence had  
earned,

Or, through illuminating grace, received,  
For their dear countrymen, and all man-  
kind.

O high example, constancy divine !

Even such a Man (inheriting the zeal  
And from the sanctity of elder times 76  
Not deviating,—a priest, the like of  
whom,

If multiplied, and in their stations set,  
Would o'er the bosom of a joyful land  
Spread true religion and her genuine  
fruits) 80

Before me stood that day ; on holy  
ground

Fraught with the relics of mortality,  
Exalting tender themes, by just degrees  
To lofty raised ; and to the highest, last ;  
The head and mighty paramount of  
truths,— 85

Immortal life, in never-fading worlds,  
For mortal creatures, conquered and se-  
cured.

That basis laid, those principles of faith  
Announced, as a preparatory act  
Of reverence done to the spirit of the  
place, 90

The Pastor cast his eyes upon the ground ;  
Not, as before, like one oppressed with  
awe,

But with a mild and social cheerfulness ;  
Then to the Solitary turned, and spake.

"At morn or eve, in your retired  
domain, 95

Perchance you not unfrequently have  
marked

A Visitor—in quest of herbs and flowers ;  
Too delicate employ, as would appear,  
For one, who, though of drooping mien,  
had yet

From nature's kindness received a frame  
Robust as ever rural labour bred." 100

The Solitary answered : "Such a Form  
Full well I recollect. We often crossed  
Each other's path ; but, as the Intruder  
seemed

Fondly to prize the silence which he  
kept, 105

And I as willingly did cherish mine,  
We met, and passed, like shadows. I  
have heard,

From my good Host, that being crazed in  
brain

By unrequited love, he scaled the  
rocks,  
Dived into caves, and pierced the matted  
woods, 110  
In hope to find some virtuous herb of  
power

To cure his malady!"

The Vicar smiled,—  
"Alas! before to-morrow's sun goes down  
His habitation will be here: for him  
That open grave is destined."

"Died he then 115  
Of pain and grief?" the Solitary asked,  
"Do not believe it; never could that be!"

"He loved," the Vicar answered,  
"deeply loved,  
Loved fondly, truly, fervently; and dared  
At length to tell his love, but sued in  
vain; 120

Rejected, yea repelled; and, if with scorn  
Upon the haughty maiden's brow, 'tis  
but

A high-prized plume which female Beauty  
wears

In wantonness of conquest, or puts on  
To cheat the world, or from herself to  
hide 125

Humiliation, when no longer free.  
That he could brook, and glory in;—but  
when

The tidings came that she whom he had  
wooed

Was wedded to another, and his heart  
Was forced to rend away its only  
hope; 130

Then, Pity could have scarcely found on  
earth

An object worthier of regard than he,  
In the transition of that bitter hour!  
Lost was she, lost; nor could the Sufferer  
say

That in the act of preference he had  
been 135

Unjustly dealt with; but the Maid was  
gone!

Had vanished from his prospects and  
desires;

Not by translation to the heavenly choir  
Who have put off their mortal spoils—  
ah no!

She lives another's wishes to com-  
plete,— 140  
'Joy be their lot, and happiness,' he cried,  
'His lot and hers, as misery must be  
mine!'

"Such was that strong concussion; but  
the Man,

Who trembled, trunk and limbs, like  
some huge oak

By a fierce tempest shaken, soon re-  
sumed 145

The steadfast quiet natural to a mind  
Of composition gentle and sedate,  
And, in its movements, circumspect and  
slow.

To books, and to the long-forsaken desk,  
O'er which enchained by science he had  
loved 150

To bend, he stoutly re-addressed him-  
self,

Resolved to quell his pain, and search for  
truth

With keener appetite (if that might be)  
And closer industry. Of what ensued  
Within the heart no outward sign ap-  
peared 155

Till a betraying sickness was seen  
To tinge his cheek; and through his frame  
it crept,

With slow mutation unconcealable;  
Such universal change as autumn makes  
In the fair body of a leafy grove 160  
Discoloured, then divested.

'Tis affirmed  
By poets skilled in nature's secret ways  
That Love will not submit to be controlled  
By mastery:—and the good Man lacked  
not friends

Who strove to instil this truth into his  
mind, 165

A mind in all heart-mysteries un-  
versed.

'Go to the hills,' said one, 'remit a while  
This baneful diligence:—at early morn

Court the fresh air, explore the heaths  
and woods;

And, leaving it to others to foretell, 170  
By calculations sage, the ebb and flow

Of tides, and when the moon will be  
eclipsed,

Do you, for your own benefit, construct  
A calendar of flowers, plucked as they  
blow

Where health abides, and cheerfulness,  
and peace.' 175

The attempt was made; 'tis needless to  
report

How hopelessly; but innocence is strong,  
And an entire simplicity of mind

A thing most sacred in the eye of  
Heaven;

That opens, for such sufferers, relief 180  
Within the soul, fountains of grace  
divine;

And doth commend their weakness and  
disease

To Nature's care, assisted in her office

By all the elements that round her wait  
To generate, to preserve, and to re-  
store; 185

And by her beautiful array of forms  
Shedding sweet influence from above; or  
pure

Delight exhaling from the ground they  
tread."

"Impute it not to impatience, if,"  
exclaimed

The Wanderer, "I infer that he was  
healed 190

By perseverance in the course prescribed."

"You do not err: the powers, that had  
been lost

By slow degrees, were gradually regained;  
The fluttering nerves composed; the beat-  
ing heart

In rest established; and the jarring  
thoughts 195

To harmony restored.—But yon dark  
mould

Will cover him, in the fulness of his  
strength,

Hastily smitten by a fever's force;

Yet not with stroke so sudden as refused  
Time to look back with tenderness on  
her 200

Whom he had loved in passion; and to  
send

Some farewell words—with one, but one,  
request;

That, from his dying hand, she would  
accept

Of his possessions that which most he  
prized;

A book, upon whose leaves some chosen  
plants, 205

By his own hand disposed with nicest care,  
In undecaying beauty were preserved;

Mute register, to him, of time and place,  
And various fluctuations in the breast;

To her, a monument of faithful love 210  
Conquered, and in tranquillity retained!

"Close to his destined habitation, lies  
One who achieved a humbler victory,  
Though marvellous in its kind. A place  
there is

High in these mountains, that allured a  
band 215

Of keen adventurers to unite their pains  
In search of precious ore: they tried, were  
foiled—

And all desisted, all, save him alone.

He, taking counsel of his own clear  
thoughts,

And trusting only to his own weak  
hands, 220

Urged unremittingly the stubborn work,  
Unseconded, uncountenanced; then, as  
time

Passed on, while still his lonely efforts  
found

No recompense, derided; and at length,  
By many pitied, as insane of mind; 225

By others dreaded as the luckless thrall  
Of subterranean Spirits feeding hope

By various mockery of sight and sound;  
Hope after hope, encouraged and de-  
stroyed.

—But when the lord of seasons had  
matured 230

The fruits of earth through space of twice  
ten years,

The mountain's entrails offered to his  
view

And trembling grasp the long-deferred  
reward.

Not with more transport did Columbus  
greet

A world, his rich discovery! But our  
Swain, 235

A very hero till his point was gained,  
Proved all unable to support the weight  
Of prosperous fortune. On the fields he  
looked

With an unsettled liberty of thought,  
Wishes and endless schemes; by daylight  
walked 240

Giddy and restless; ever and anon  
Quaffed in his gratitude immoderate  
cups;

And truly might be said to die of joy!  
He vanished; but conspicuous to this  
day

The path remains that linked his cottage-  
door 245

To the mine's mouth; a long and slanting  
track,

Upon the rugged mountain's stony side,  
Worn by his daily visits to and from

The darksome centre of a constant hope.  
This vestige, neither force of beating rain,  
Nor the vicissitudes of frost and thaw 251  
Shall cause to fade, till ages pass away;  
And it is named, in memory of the event,  
The PATH OF PERSEVERANCE."

"Thou from whom  
Man has his strength," exclaimed the  
Wanderer, "oh! 255

Do thou direct it! To the virtuous grant  
The penetrative eye which can perceive  
In this blind world the guiding vein of  
hope;

That, like this Labourer, such may dig  
their way,

'Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified;' 260  
Grant to the wise his firmness of re-  
solve!"

"That prayer were not superfluous,"  
said the Priest,

"Amid the noblest relics, proudest dust,  
That Westminster, for Britain's glory,  
holds

Within the bosom of her awful pile, 265  
Ambitiously collected. Yet the sigh,  
Which wafts that prayer to heaven, is  
due to all,

Wherever laid, who living fell below  
Their virtue's humbler mark; a sigh of  
*pain*

If to the opposite extreme they sank. 270

How would you pity her who yonder  
rests;

Him, farther off; the pair, who here are  
laid;

But, above all, that mixture of earth's  
mould

Whom sight of this green hillock to my  
mind

Recalls!

He lived not till his locks were  
nipped 275

By seasonable frost of age; nor died  
Before his temples, prematurely forced

To mix the manly brown with silver grey,  
Gave obvious instance of the sad effect

Produced, when thoughtless Folly hath  
usurped 280

The natural crown that sage Experience  
wears.

Gay, volatile, ingenious, quick to learn,  
And prompt to exhibit all that he pos-  
sessed

Or could perform; a zealous actor, hired  
Into the troop of mirth, a soldier, sworn

Into the lists of giddy enterprise— 285  
Such was he; yet, as if within his frame

Two several souls alternately had lodged,  
Two sets of manners could the Youth  
put on;

And, fraught with antics as the Indian  
bird 290

That writhes and chatters in her wiry cage,  
Was graceful, when it pleased him, smooth

and still

As the mute swan that floats adown the  
stream,

Or, on the waters of the unruffled lake,  
Anchors her placid beauty. Not a leaf,

That flutters on the bough, lighter than  
he; 295

And not a flower, that droops in the  
green shade,

More winningly reserved! If ye enquire  
How such consummate elegance was bred

Amid these wilds, this answer may suf-  
fice; 300

'Twas Nature's will; who sometimes un-  
dertakes,

For the reproof of human vanity,  
Art to outstrip in her peculiar walk.

Hence, for this Favourite—lavishly endowed  
 With personal gifts, and bright instinctive wit, 305  
 While both, embellishing each other, stood  
 Yet farther recommended by the charm  
 Of fine demeanour, and by dance and song,  
 And skill in letters—every fancy shaped  
 Fair expectations; nor, when to the world's 310  
 Capacious field forth went the Adventurer, there  
 Were he and his attainments overlooked,  
 Or scantily rewarded; but all hopes,  
 Cherished for him, he suffered to depart,  
 Like blighted buds; or clouds that mimicked land 315  
 Before the sailor's eye; or diamond drops  
 That sparkling decked the morning grass;  
 or aught  
 That *was* attractive, and hath ceased to be!

“Yet, when this Prodigal returned, the rites  
 Of joyful greeting were on him bestowed,  
 Who, by humiliation undeterred, 321  
 Sought for his weariness a place of rest  
 Within his Father's gates.—Whence came he?—clothed  
 In tattered garb, from hovels where abides  
 Necessity, the stationary host 325  
 Of vagrant poverty; from rifted barns  
 Where no one dwells but the wide-staring owl  
 And the owl's prey; from these bare haunts, to which  
 He had descended from the proud saloon,  
 He came, the ghost of beauty and of health, 330  
 The wreck of gaiety! But soon revived  
 In strength, in power refitted, he renewed  
 His suit to Fortune; and she smiled again  
 Upon a fickle Ingrate. Thrice he rose,  
 Thrice sank as willingly. For he—whose nerves 335  
 Were used to thrill with pleasure, while his voice  
 Softly accompanied the tuneful harp,  
 By the nice finger of fair ladies touched

In glittering halls—was able to derive  
 No less enjoyment from an abject choice.  
 Who happier for the moment—who more blithe 341  
 Than this fallen Spirit? in those dreary holds  
 His talents lending to exalt the freaks  
 Of merry-making beggars,—now, provoked 344  
 To laughter multiplied in louder peals  
 By his malicious wit; then, all enchained  
 With mute astonishment, themselves to see  
 In their own arts outdone, their fame eclipsed,  
 As by the very presence of the Fiend  
 Who dictates and inspires illusive feats,  
 For knavish purposes! The city, too, 351  
 (With shame I speak it) to her guilty bowers  
 Allured him, sunk so low in self-respect  
 As there to linger, there to eat his bread,  
 Hired minstrel of voluptuous blandishment; 355  
 Charming the air with skill of hand or voice,  
 Listen who would, be wrought upon who might,  
 Sincerely wretched hearts, or falsely gay.  
 —Such the too frequent tenour of his boast  
 In ears that relished the report;—but all  
 Was from his Parents happily concealed;  
 Who saw enough for blame and pitying love.  
 They also were permitted to receive  
 His last, repentant breath; and closed his eyes, 364  
 No more to open on that irksome world  
 Where he had long existed in the state  
 Of a young fowl beneath one mother hatched,  
 Though from another sprung, different in kind:  
 Where he had lived, and could not cease to live,  
 Distracted from propensity; content 370  
 With neither element of good or ill;  
 And yet in both rejoicing; man unblest;  
 Of contradictions infinite the slave,

Till his deliverance, when Mercy made him  
One with himself, and one with them  
that sleep." 375

"'Tis strange," observed the Solitary,  
"strange"

It seems, and scarcely less than pitiful,  
That in a land where charity provides  
For all that can no longer feed themselves,  
A man like this should choose to bring  
his shame 380

To the parental door; and with his sighs  
Infect the air which he had freely breathed  
In happy infancy. He could not pine  
Through lack of converse; no—he must  
have found

Abundant exercise for thought and speech,  
In his dividual being, self-reviewed, 386  
Self-catechised, self-punished.—Some  
there are

Who, drawing near their final home, and  
much

And daily longing that the same were  
reached,

Would rather shun than seek the fellow-  
ship 390

Of kindred mould.—Such haply here are  
laid?"

"Yes," said the Priest, "the Genius of  
our hills—

Who seems, by these stupendous barriers  
cast

Round his domain, desirous not alone  
To keep his own, but also to exclude 395

All other progeny—doth sometimes lure,  
Even by his studied depth of privacy,

The unhappy alien hoping to obtain  
Concealment, or seduced by wish to find,

In place from outward molestation free,  
Helps to internal ease. Of many such 401

Could I discourse; but as their stay was  
brief,

So their departure only left behind  
Fancies, and loose conjectures. Other

trace

Survives, for worthy mention, of a pair  
Who, from the pressure of their several

fates, 406

Meeting as strangers, in a petty town  
Whose blue roofs ornament a distant reach

Of this far-winding vale, remained as  
friends

True to their choice; and gave their  
bones in trust 410

To this loved cemetery, here to lodge  
With unescorted privacy interred

Far from the family vault.—A Chieftain  
one

By right of birth; within whose spotless  
breast

The fire of ancient Caledonia burned:  
He, with the foremost whose impatience

hailed 416

The Stuart, landing to resume, by force  
Of arms, the crown which bigotry had

lost,

Aroused his clan; and, fighting at their  
head,

With his brave sword endeavoured to  
prevent 420

Culloden's fatal overthrow. Escaped  
From that disastrous rout, to foreign shores

He fled; and when the lenient hand of  
time

Those troubles had appeased, he sought  
and gained,

For his obscured condition, an obscure  
Retreat, within this nook of English  
ground. 426

"The other, born in Britain's southern  
tract,

Had fixed his milder loyalty, and placed  
His gentler sentiments of love and hate,

There, where they placed them who in  
conscience prized 430

The new succession, as a line of kings  
Whose oath had virtue to protect the land

Against the dire assaults of papacy  
And arbitrary rule. But launch thy bark

On the distempered flood of public life,  
And cause for most rare triumph will be

thine 436

If, spite of keenest eye and steadiest  
hand,

The stream, that bears thee forward,  
prove not, soon

Or late, a perilous master. He—who oft,  
Beneath the battlements and stately trees

That round his mansion cast a sober  
gloom, 441

Had moralised on this, and other truths  
Of kindred import, pleased and satisfied—  
Was forced to vent his wisdom with a  
sigh

Heaved from the heart in fortune's bitter-  
ness, 445

When he had crushed a plentiful estate  
By ruinous contest, to obtain a seat  
In Britain's senate. Fruitless was the  
attempt :

And while the uproar of that desperate  
strife

Continued yet to vibrate on his ear, 450  
The vanquished Whig, under a borrowed  
name,

(For the mere sound and echo of his own  
Haunted him with sensations of disgust  
That he was glad to lose) slunk from the  
world

To the deep shade of those untravell'd  
Wilds; 455

In which the Scottish Laird had long  
possessed

An undisturbed abode. Here, then, they  
met,

Two doughty champions; flaming Ja-  
cobite

And sullen Hanoverian! You might think  
That losses and vexations, less severe 460  
Than those which they had severally sus-  
tained,

Would have inclined each to abate his  
zeal

For his ungrateful cause; no,—I have  
heard

My reverend Father tell that, 'mid the  
calm

Of that small town encountering thus,  
they filled, 465

Daily, its bowling-green with harmless  
strife;

Plagued with uncharitable thoughts the  
church;

And vexed the market-place. But in the  
breasts

Of these opponents gradually was wrought,  
With little change of general sentiment,

Such leaning towards each other, that  
their days 471

By choice were spent in constant fellow-  
ship;

And if, at times, they fretted with the  
yoke,  
Those very bickerings made them love it  
more.

"A favourite boundary to their length-  
ened walks 475

This Churchyard was. And, whether they  
had come

Treading their path in sympathy and  
linked

In social converse, or by some short space  
Discreetly parted to preserve the peace,

One spirit seldom failed to extend its  
sway 480

Over both minds, when they awhile had  
marked

The visible quiet of this holy ground,  
And breathed its soothing air;—the spirit  
of hope

And saintly magnanimity; that—spurn-  
ing

The field of selfish difference and dis-  
pute, 485

And every care which transitory things,  
Earth and the kingdoms of the earth,  
create—

Doth, by a rapture of forgetfulness,  
Preclude forgiveness, from the praise de-  
barred,

Which else the Christian virtue might  
have claimed. 490

"There live who yet remember here to  
have seen

Their courtly figures, seated on the stump  
Of an old yew, their favourite resting-  
place.

But as the remnant of the long-lived tree  
Was disappearing by a swift decay, 495

They, with joint care, determined to erect,  
Upon its site, a dial, that might stand

For public use preserved, and thus sur-  
vive

As their own private monument: for  
this

Was the particular spot, in which they  
wished 500

(And Heaven was pleased to accomplish  
the desire)

That, undivided, their remains should lie.

So, where the mouldered tree had stood,  
 was raised  
 Yon structure, framing, with the ascent  
 of steps  
 That to the decorated pillar lead, 505  
 A work of art more sumptuous than  
 might seem  
 To suit this place; yet built in no proud  
 scorn  
 Of rustic homeliness; they only aimed  
 To ensure for it respectful guardianship.  
 Around the margin of the plate, whereon  
 The shadow falls to note the stealthy  
 hours, 511  
 Winds an inscriptive legend."—At these  
 words  
 Thither we turned; and gathered, as we  
 read,  
 The appropriate sense, in Latin numbers  
 couched:  
*"Time flies; it is his melancholy task 515*  
*To bring, and bear away, delusive hopes,*  
*And reproduce the troubles he destroys.*  
*But, while his blindness thus is occupied,*  
*Discerning Mortal! do thou serve the will*  
*Of Time's eternal Master, and that peace,*  
*Which the world wants, shall be for thee*  
*confirmed!" 521*

"Smooth verse, inspired by no un-  
 lettered Muse,"  
 Exclaimed the Sceptic, "and the strain  
 of thought  
 Accords with nature's language;—the soft  
 voice  
 Of yon white torrent falling down the  
 rocks 525  
 Speaks, less distinctly, to the same ef-  
 fect.  
 If, then, their, blended influence be not  
 lost  
 Upon our hearts, not wholly lost, I grant,  
 Even upon mine, the more are we re-  
 quired 529  
 To feel for those among our fellow-men,  
 Who, offering no obeisance to the world,  
 Are yet made desperate by 'too quick  
 a sense  
 Of constant infelicity,' cut off  
 From peace like exiles on some barren  
 rock,

Their life's appointed prison; not more  
 free 535  
 Than sentinels, between two armies, set,  
 With nothing better, in the chill night  
 air,  
 Than their own thoughts to comfort them.  
 Say why  
 That ancient story of Prometheus chained  
 To the bare rock, on frozen Caucasus; 540  
 The vulture, the inexhaustible repast  
 Drawn from his vitals? Say what meant  
 the woes  
 By Tantalus entailed upon his race,  
 And the dark sorrows of the line of  
 Thebes?  
 Fictions in form, but in their substance  
 truths, 545  
 Tremendous truths! familiar to the men  
 Of long-past times, nor obsolete in ours.  
 Exchange the shepherd's frock of native  
 grey  
 For robes with regal purple tinged; con-  
 vert  
 The crook into a sceptre; give the pomp  
 Of circumstance; and here the tragic  
 Muse 551  
 Shall find apt subjects for her highest art.  
 Amid the groves, under the shadowy  
 hills,  
 The generations are prepared; the pangs.  
 The internal pangs, are ready; the dread  
 strife 555  
 Of poor humanity's afflicted will  
 Struggling in vain with ruthless destiny."

"Though," said the Priest in answer,  
 "these be terms  
 Which a divine philosophy rejects,  
 We, whose established and unfailling  
 trust 560  
 Is in controlling Providence, admit  
 That, through all stations, human life  
 abounds  
 With mysteries;—for, if Faith were left  
 untried,  
 How could the might, that lurks within  
 her, then  
 Be shown? her glorious excellence—that  
 ranks 565  
 Among the first of Powers and Virtues—  
 proved?

Our system is not fashioned to preclude  
That sympathy which you for others ask;  
And I could tell, not travelling for my  
theme

Beyond these humble graves, of grievous  
crimes 570

And strange disasters; but I pass them  
by,

Loth to disturb what Heaven hath hushed  
in peace.

—Still less, far less, am I inclined to treat  
Of Man degraded in his Maker's sight  
By the deformities of brutish vice: 575

For, in such portraits, though a vulgar  
face

And a coarse outside of repulsive life  
And unaffecting manners might at once  
Be recognised by all—"Ah! do not  
think,"

The Wanderer somewhat eagerly ex-  
claimed, 580

"Wish could be ours that you, for such  
poor gain,

(Gain shall I call it?—gain of what?—for  
whom?)

Should breathe a word tending to violate  
Your own pure spirit. Not a step we  
look for

In slight of that forbearance and reserve  
Which common human-heartedness in-  
spires, 586

And mortal ignorance and frailty claim,  
Upon this sacred ground, if nowhere else."

"True," said the Solitary, "be it far  
From us to infringe the laws of charity.  
Let judgment here in mercy be pro-  
nounced; 591

This, self-respecting Nature prompts, and  
this

Wisdom enjoins; but if the thing we seek  
Be genuine knowledge, bear we then in  
mind

How, from his lofty throne, the sun can  
fling 595

Colours as bright on exhalations bred  
By weedy pool or pestilential swamp,  
As by the rivulet sparkling where it runs,  
Or the pellucid lake."

"Small risk," said I,  
"Of such illusion do we here incur; 600

Temptation here is none to exceed the  
truth;

No evidence appears that they who rest  
Within this ground, were covetous of  
praise,

Or of remembrance even, deserved or not.  
Green is the Churchyard, beautiful and  
green, 605

Ridge rising gently by the side of ridge,  
A heaving surface, almost wholly free  
From interruption of sepulchral stones,  
And mantled o'er with aboriginal turf  
And everlasting flowers. These Dalesmen  
trust 610

The lingering gleam of their departed  
lives

To oral record, and the silent heart;  
Depositories faithful and more kind  
Than fondest epitaph: for, if those fail,  
What boots the sculptured tomb? And  
who can blame, 615

Who rather would not envy, men that  
feel

This mutual confidence; if, from such  
source,

The practice flow,—if thence, or from  
a deep

And general humility in death?  
Nor should I much condemn it, if it  
spring 620

From disregard of time's destructive  
power,

As only capable to prey on things  
Of earth, and human nature's mortal part.

"Yet—in less simple districts, where  
we see

Stone lift its forehead emulous of stone  
In courting notice; and the ground all  
paved 626

With commendations of departed worth;  
Reading, where'er we turn, of innocent  
lives,

Of each domestic charity fulfilled,  
And sufferings meekly borne—I, for my  
part, 630

Though with the silence pleased that here  
prevails,

Among those fair recitals also range,  
Soothed by the natural spirit which they  
breathe.

And, in the centre of a world whose soil  
Is rank with all unkindness, compassed  
round 635

With such memorials, I have sometimes  
felt,

It was no momentary happiness  
To have *one* Enclosure where the voice  
that speaks

In envy or detraction is not heard;  
Which malice may not enter; where the  
traces 640

Of evil inclinations are unknown;  
Where love and pity tenderly unite  
With resignation; and no jarring tone  
Intrudes, the peaceful concert to disturb  
Of amity and gratitude."

"Thus sanctioned," 645  
The Pastor said, "I willingly confine  
My narratives to subjects that excite  
Feelings with these accordant; love, es-  
teem,

And admiration; lifting up a veil,  
A sunbeam introducing among hearts 650  
Retired and covert; so that ye shall have  
Clear images before your gladdened eyes  
Of nature's unambitious underwood,  
And flowers that prosper in the shade.  
And when

I speak of such among my flock as  
swerved 655

Or fell, those only shall be singled out  
Upon whose lapse, or error, something  
more

Than brotherly forgiveness may attend;  
To such will we restrict our notice, else  
Better my tongue were mute.

And yet there are,  
I feel, good reasons why we should not  
leave 661

Wholly untraced a more forbidding way.  
For, strength to persevere and to support,  
And energy to conquer and repel—

These elements of virtue, that declare 665  
The native grandeur of the human soul—  
Are oft-times not unprofitably shown

In the perverseness of a selfish course:  
Truth every day exemplified, no less

In the grey cottage by the murmuring  
stream 670

Than in fantastic conqueror's roving camp,  
Or 'mid the factious senate unappalled

Whoe'er may sink, or rise—to sink again,  
As merciless proscription ebbs and flows.

"There," said the Vicar, pointing as he  
spake, 675

"A woman rests in peace; surpassed by  
few

In power of mind, and eloquent discourse.  
Tall was her stature; her complexion  
dark

And saturnine; her head not raised to  
hold

Converse with heaven, nor yet deprest  
towards earth, 680

But in projection carried, as she walked  
For ever musing. Sunken were her eyes;  
Wrinkled and furrowed with habitual  
thought

Was her broad forehead; like the brow  
of one

Whose visual nerve shrinks from a pain-  
ful glare 685

Of overpowering light.—While yet a  
child,

She, 'mid the humble flowerets of the vale,  
Towered like the imperial thistle, not  
unfurnished

With its appropriate grace, yet rather  
seeking

To be admired, than coveted and loved.  
Even at that age she ruled, a sovereign  
queen, 691

Over her comrades; else their simple  
sports,

Wanting all relish for her strenuous  
mind,

Had crossed her only to be shunned with  
scorn.

—Oh! pang of sorrowful regret for those  
Whom, in their youth, sweet study has  
enthralled, 696

That they have lived for harsher servi-  
tude,

Whether in soul, in body, or estate!  
Such doom was hers; yet nothing could  
subdue 699

Her keen desire of knowledge, nor efface  
Those brighter images by books imprest

Upon her memory, faithfully as stars  
That occupy their places, and, though  
oft

Hidden by clouds, and oft bedimmed by  
haze,  
Are not to be extinguished, nor impaired.

"Two passions, both degenerate, for  
they both 706

Began in Honour, gradually obtained  
Rule over her, and vexed her daily life;  
An unremitting, avaricious thrift; 709  
And a strange thralldom of maternal love,  
That held her spirit, in its own despite,  
Bound—by vexation, and regret, and  
scorn,

Constrained forgiveness, and relenting  
vows,  
And tears, in pride suppressed, in shame  
concealed—

To a poor dissolute Son, her only child.  
—Her wedded days had opened with  
mishap, 716

Whence dire dependence. What could  
she perform

To shake the burthen off? Ah! there  
was felt,

Indignantly, the weakness of her sex.  
She mused, resolved, adhered to her  
resolve; 720

The hand grew slack in alms-giving, the  
heart

Closed by degrees to charity; heaven's  
blessing

Not seeking from that source, she placed  
her trust

In ceaseless pains—and strictest parsimony  
Which sternly hoarded all that could be  
spared, 725

From each day's need, out of each day's  
least gain.

"Thus all was re-established, and a pile  
Constructed, that sufficed for every end,  
Save the contentment of the builder's  
mind;

A mind by nature indisposed to aught  
So placid, so inactive, as content; 731

A mind intolerant of lasting peace,  
And cherishing the pang her heart de-  
plored.

Dread life of conflict! which I oft com-  
pared

To the agitation of a brook that runs 735

Down a rocky mountain, buried now and  
lost

In silent pools, now in strong eddies  
chained;

But never to be charmed to gentleness:  
Its best attainment fits of such repose  
As timid eyes might shrink from fathom-  
ing. 740

"A sudden illness seized her in the  
strength

Of life's autumnal season.—Shall I tell  
How on her bed of death the Matron lay,  
To Providence submissive, so she thought;  
But fretted, vexed, and wrought upon,  
almost 745

To anger, by the malady that griped  
Her prostrate frame with unrelaxing  
power,

As the fierce eagle fastens on the lamb?  
She prayed, she moaned;—her husband's  
sister watched 749

Her dreary pillow, waited on her needs;  
And yet the very sound of that kind foot  
Was anguish to her ears! 'And must she  
rule,'

This was the death-doomed Woman heard  
to say

In bitterness, 'and must she rule and  
reign,

Sole Mistress of this house, when I am  
gone? 755

Tend what I tended, calling it her own!'   
Enough;—I fear, too much.—One vernal  
evening,

While she was yet in prime of health and  
strength,

I well remember, while I passed her door  
Alone, with loitering step, and upward  
eye 760

Turned towards the planet Jupiter that  
hung

Above the centre of the Vale, a voice  
Roused me, her voice; it said, 'That  
glorious star

In its untroubled element will shine  
As now it shines, when we are laid in  
earth 765

And safe from all our sorrows.' With a  
sigh

She spake, yet, I believe, not unsustained

By faith in glory that shall far transcend  
Aught by these perishable heavens disclosed

To sight or mind. Nor less than care  
divine 770

Is divine mercy. She, who had rebelled,  
Was into meekness softened and subdued;

Did, after trials not in vain prolonged,  
With resignation sink into the grave;  
And her uncharitable acts, I trust, 775  
And harsh unkindnesses are all forgiven,  
Tho' in this Vale, remembered with deep  
awe."

THE Vicar paused; and toward a seat  
advanced,

A long stone-seat, fixed in the Church-  
yard wall; 779

Part shaded by cool sycamore, and part  
Offering a sunny resting-place to them  
Who seek the House of worship, while  
the bells

Yet ring with all their voices, or before  
The last hath ceased its solitary knoll.

Beneath the shade we all sate down; and  
there 785

His office, uninvited, he resumed.

"As on a sunny bank, a tender lamb  
Lurks in safe shelter from the winds of  
March,

Screened by its parent, so that little  
mound

Lies guarded by its neighbour; the small  
heap 790

Speaks for itself; an Infant there doth  
rest;

The sheltering hillock is the Mother's  
grave.

If mild discourse, and manners that con-  
ferred

A natural dignity on humblest rank;  
If gladsome spirits, and benignant looks,  
That for a face not beautiful did more  
Than beauty for the fairest face can do;  
And if religious tenderness of heart,  
Grieving for sin, and penitential tears  
Shed when the clouds had gathered and  
distained 800

The spotless ether of a maiden life;  
If these may make a hallowed spot of  
earth

More holy in the sight of God or Man;  
Then, o'er that mould, a sanctity shall

brood 804  
Till the stars sicken at the day of doom.

"Ah! what a warning for a thoughtless  
man,

Could field or grove, could any spot of  
earth,

Show to his eye an image of the pangs  
Which it hath witnessed; render back

an echo  
Of the sad steps by which it hath been  
trod! 810

There, by her innocent Baby's precious  
grave,

And on the very turf that roofs her own,  
The Mother oft was seen to stand, or  
kneel

In the broad day, a weeping Magdalene.  
Now she is not; the swelling turf reports

Of the fresh shower, but of poor Ellen's  
tears 816

Is silent; nor is any vestige left  
Of the path worn by mournful tread of her

Who, at her heart's light bidding, once  
had moved

In virgin fearlessness, with step that  
seemed 820

Caught from the pressure of elastic turf  
Upon the mountains gemmed with morn-  
ing dew,

In the prime hour of sweetest scents and  
airs.

—Serious and thoughtful was her mind;  
and yet,

By reconciliation exquisite and rare, 825  
The form, port, motions, of this Cottage-  
girl

Were such as might have quickened and  
inspired

A Titian's hand, address to picture forth  
Oread or Dryad glancing through the  
shade

What time the hunter's earliest horn is  
heard 830

Startling the golden hills.

A wide-spread elm

Stands in our valley, named THE JOYFUL  
TREE;

From dateless usage which our peasants  
hold

Of giving welcome to the first of May  
By dances round its trunk.—And if the  
sky • 835

Permit, like honours, dance and song, are  
paid

To the Twelfth Night, beneath the frosty  
stars

Or the clear moon. The queen of these  
gay sports,

If not in beauty yet in sprightly air,  
Was hapless Ellen.—No one touched the  
ground 840

So deftly, and the nicest maiden's locks  
Less gracefully were braided;—but this  
praise,

Methinks, would better suit another  
place.

“She loved, and fondly deemed her-  
self beloved.

—The road is dim, the current unper-  
ceived, 845

The weakness painful and most pitiful,  
By which a virtuous woman, in pure  
youth,

May be delivered to distress and shame.  
Such fate was hers.—The last time Ellen  
danced,

Among her equals, round THE JOYFUL  
TREE, 850

She bore a secret burthen; and full soon  
Was left to tremble for a breaking vow,—  
Then, to bewail a sternly-broken vow,  
Alone, within her widowed Mother's  
house,

It was the season of unfolding leaves, 855  
Of days advancing toward their utmost  
length,

And small birds singing happily to mates  
Happy as they. With spirit-saddening  
power

Winds pipe through fading woods; but  
those blithe notes 859

Strike the deserted to the heart; I speak  
Of what I know, and what we feel within.

—Beside the cottage in which Ellen  
dwelt

Stands a tall ash-tree; to whose topmost  
twig

A thrush resorts, and annually chants,  
At morn and evening from that naked  
perch, 865

While all the undergrove is thick with  
leaves,

A time-beguiling ditty, for delight  
Of his fond partner, silent in the nest.

—‘Ah why,’ said Ellen, sighing to her-  
self,

‘Why do not words, and kiss, and solemn  
pledge, 870

And nature that is kind in woman's  
breast,

And reason that in man is wise and good,  
And fear of him who is a righteous judge;

Why do not these prevail for human life,  
To keep two hearts together, that began

Their spring-time with one love, and  
that have need 876

Of mutual pity and forgiveness, sweet  
To grant, or be received; while that poor  
bird—

O come and hear him! Thou who hast to  
me

Been faithless, hear him, though a lowly  
creature, 880

One of God's simple children that yet  
know not

The universal Parent, how he sings  
As if he wished the firmament of heaven

Should listen, and give back to him the  
voice

Of his triumphant constancy and love;  
The proclamation that he makes, how  
far 886

His darkness doth transcend our fickle  
light!

“Such was the tender passage, not by  
me

Repeated without loss of simple phrase,  
Which I perused, even as the words had  
been 890

Committed by forsaken Ellen's hand  
To the blank margin of a Valentine,

Bedropped with tears. 'Twill please you  
to be told

That, studiously withdrawing from the  
eye 894

Of all companionship, the Sufferer yet  
In lonely reading found a meek resource:  
How thankful for the warmth of summer  
days,

When she could slip into the cottage-  
barn,

And find a secret oratory there;  
Or, in the garden, under friendly veil go  
Of their long twilight, pore upon her  
book

By the last lingering help of the open sky  
Until dark night dismissed her to her  
bed!

Thus did a waking fancy sometimes lose  
The unconquerable pang of despised love.

“A kindlier passion opened on her soul  
When that poor Child was born. Upon  
its face

She gazed as on a pure and spotless gift  
Of unexpected promise, where a grief  
Or dread was all that had been thought  
of,—joy 910

Far livelier than bewildered traveller  
feels,

Amid a perilous waste that all night long  
Hath harassed him toiling through fear-  
ful storm,

When he beholds the first pale speck  
serene

Of day-spring, in the gloomy east, re-  
vealed, 915

And greets it with thanksgiving. ‘Till  
this hour,’

Thus, in her Mother’s hearing Ellen  
spake,

‘There was a stony region in my heart;  
But He, at whose command the parchèd  
rock

Was smitten, and poured forth a quench-  
ing stream, 920

Hath softened that obduracy, and made  
Unlooked-for gladness in the desert place,  
To save the perishing; and, henceforth, I  
breathe

The air with cheerful spirit, for thy sake,  
My Infant! and for that good Mother  
dear, 925

Who bore me; and hath prayed for me  
in vain;—

Yet not in vain; it shall not be in vain.’

She spake, nor was the assurance unful-  
filled;

And if heart-rending thoughts would oft  
return,

They stayed not long.—The blameless  
Infant grew; 930

The Child whom Ellen and her Mother  
loved

They soon were proud of; tended it and  
nursed;

A soothing comforter, although forlorn;  
Like a poor singing-bird from distant  
lands;

Or a choice shrub, which he, who passes by  
With vacant mind, not seldom may ob-  
serve 936

Fair-flowering in a thinly-peopled house,  
Whose window, somewhat sadly, it  
adorns.

“Through four months’ space the Infant  
drew its food

From the maternal breast; then scruples  
rose; 940

Thoughts, which the rich are free from,  
came and crossed

The fond affection. She no more could  
bear

By her offence to lay a twofold weight  
On a kind parent willing to forget

Their slender means: so, to that parent’s  
care 945

Trusting her child, she left their common  
home,

And undertook with dutiful content  
A Foster-mother’s office.

‘Tis, perchance,  
Unknown to you that in these simple  
vales

The natural feeling of equality 950

Is by domestic service unimpaired;  
Yet, though such service be, with us,  
removed

From sense of degradation, not the less  
The ungentle mind can easily find means

To impose severe restraints and laws  
unjust, 955

Which hapless Ellen now was doomed to  
feel:

For (blinded by an over-anxious dread  
Of such excitement and divided thought

As with her office would but ill accord)  
 The pair, whose infant she was bound to  
     nurse, 950  
 Forbad her all communion with her own:  
 Week after week, the mandate they en-  
     forced.  
 —So near! yet not allowed upon that  
     sight  
 To fix her eyes—alas! 'twas hard to bear!  
 But worse affliction must be borne—far  
     worse; 965  
 For 'tis Heaven's will—that, after a disease  
 Begun and ended within three days' space,  
 Her child should die; as Ellen now ex-  
     claimed,  
 Her own—deserted child!—Once, only  
     once,  
 She saw it in that mortal malady; 970  
 And, on the burial-day, could scarcely gain  
 Permission to attend its obsequies.  
 She reached the house, last of the funeral  
     train;  
 And some one, as she entered, having  
     chanced  
 To urge unthinkingly their prompt de-  
     parture, 975  
 'Nay,' said she, with commanding look,  
     a spirit  
 Of anger never seen in her before,  
 'Nay, ye must wait my time!' and down  
     she sate,  
 And by the unclosed coffin kept her seat  
 Weeping and looking, looking on and  
     weeping, 980  
 Upon the last sweet slumber of her Child,  
 Until at length her soul was satisfied.

"You see the Infant's Grave; and to  
     this spot,  
 The Mother, oft as she was sent abroad,  
 On whatsoever errand, urged her steps:  
 Hither she came; here stood, and some-  
     times knelt 986  
 In the broad day, a rueful Magdalene!  
 So call her; for not only she bewailed  
 A mother's loss, but mourned in bitter-  
     ness  
 Her own transgression; penitent sincere  
 As ever raised to heaven a streaming eye!  
 —At length the parents of the foster-  
     child, 992

Noting that in despite of their commands  
 She still renewed and could not but renew  
 Those visitations, ceased to send her  
     forth; 995  
 Or, to the garden's narrow bounds, con-  
     fined.  
 I failed not to remind them that they  
     erred;  
 For holy Nature might not thus be  
     crossed,  
 Thus wronged in woman's breast: in vain  
     I pleaded—  
 But the green stalk of Ellen's life was  
     snapped, 1000  
 And the flower drooped; as every eye  
     could see,  
 It hung its head in mortal languishment.  
 —Aided by this appearance, I at length  
 Prevailed; and, from those bonds released,  
     she went  
 Home to her mother's house.  
     The Youth was fled;  
 The rash betrayer could not face the  
     shame 1006  
 Or sorrow which his senseless guilt had  
     caused;  
 And little would his presence, or proof  
     given  
 Of a relenting soul, have now availed;  
 For, like a shadow, he was passed away  
 From Ellen's thoughts; had perished to  
     her mind 1011  
 For all concerns of fear, or hope, or love,  
 Save only those which to their common  
     shame,  
 And to his moral being appertained:  
 Hope from that quarter would, I know,  
     have brought 1015  
 A heavenly comfort; there she recognised  
 An unrelaxing bond, a mutual need;  
 There, and, as seemed, there only.  
     She had built,  
 Her fond maternal heart had built, a nest  
 In blindness all too near the river's edge;  
 That work a summer flood with hasty  
     swell 1021  
 Had swept away; and now her Spirit  
     longed  
 For its last flight to heaven's security.  
 —The bodily frame wasted from day to  
     day;

Meanwhile, relinquishing all other cares,  
 Her mind she strictly tutored to find  
     peace 1026  
 And pleasure in endurance. Much she  
     thought,  
 And much she read; and brooded feel-  
     ingly  
 Upon her own unworthiness. To me,  
 As to a spiritual comforter and friend,  
 Her heart she opened; and no pains were  
     spared 1031  
 To mitigate, as gently as I could,  
 The sting of self-reproach, with healing  
     words.  
 Meek Saint! through patience glorified  
     on earth!  
 In whom, as by her lonely hearth she  
     sate, 1035  
 The ghastly face of cold decay put on  
 A sun-like beauty, and appeared divine!  
 May I not mention—that, within those  
     walls,  
 In due observance of her pious wish,  
 The congregation joined with me in  
     prayer 1040  
 For her soul's good? Nor was that office  
     vain.  
 —Much did she suffer: but, if any friend,  
 Beholding her condition, at the sight  
 Give way to words of pity or complaint,  
 She stilled them with a prompt reproof,  
     and said, 1045  
 'He who afflicts me knows what I can  
     bear;  
 And, when I fail, and can endure no  
     more,  
 Will mercifully take me to himself.'  
 So, through the cloud of death, her Spirit  
     passed  
 Into that pure and unknown world of  
     love 1050  
 Where injury cannot come:—and here is  
     laid  
 The mortal Body by her Infant's side."

The Vicar ceased; and downcast looks  
     made known  
 That each had listened with his inmost  
     heart.  
 For me, the emotion scarcely was less  
     strong 1055

Or less benign than that which I had felt  
 When seated near my venerable Friend,  
 Under those shady elms, from him I  
     heard  
 The story that retraced the slow decline  
 Of Margaret, sinking on the lonely heath  
 With the neglected house to which she  
     clung. 1061  
 —I noted that the Solitary's cheek  
 Confessed the power of nature.—Pleased  
     though sad,  
 More pleased than sad, the grey-haired  
     Wanderer sate;  
 Thanks to his pure imaginative soul 1065  
 Capacious and serene; his blameless life,  
 His knowledge, wisdom, love of truth,  
     and love  
 Of human kind! He was it who first  
     broke  
 The pensive silence, saying:—  
     "Blest are they  
 Whose sorrow rather is to suffer wrong  
 Than to do wrong, albeit themselves have  
     erred. 1071  
 This tale gives proof that Heaven most  
     gently deals  
 With such, in their affliction.—Ellen's  
     fate,  
 Her tender spirit, and her contrite heart,  
 Call to my mind dark hints which I have  
     heard 1075  
 Of one who died within this vale, by doom  
 Heavier, as his offence was heavier far.  
 Where, Sir, I pray you, where are laid the  
     bones  
 Of Wilfred Armathwaite?"  
     The Vicar answered,  
 "In that green nook, close by the Church-  
     yard wall, 1080  
 Beneath yon hawthorn, planted by myself  
 In memory and for warning, and in sign  
 Of sweetness where dire anguish had been  
     known,  
 Of reconciliation after deep offence—  
 There doth he rest. No theme his fate  
     supplies 1085  
 For the smooth glozings of the indulgent  
     world;  
 Nor need the windings of his devious  
     course  
 Be here retraced;—enough that, by mishap

And venial error, robbed of competence,  
 And her obsequious shadow, peace of mind,  
 He craved a substitute in troubled joy ;  
 Against his conscience rose in arms, and,  
     braving 1092  
 Divine displeasure, broke the marriage-  
     vow. •

That which he had been weak enough to do  
 Was misery in remembrance ; he was  
     stung, 1095  
 Stung by his inward thoughts, and by the  
     smiles

Of wife and children stung to agony.  
 Wretched at home, he gained no peace  
     abroad ;

Ranged through the mountains, slept  
     upon the earth, 1099

Asked comfort of the open air, and found  
 No quiet in the darkness of the night,  
 No pleasure in the beauty of the day.  
 His flock he slighted : his paternal fields  
 Became a clog to him, whose spirit wished  
 To fly—but whither ! And this gracious  
     Church, 1105

That wears a look so full of peace and  
     hope

And love, benignant mother of the vale,  
 How fair amid her brood of cottages !  
 She was to him a sickness and reproach.  
 Much to the last remained unknown : but  
     this 1110

Is sure, that through remorse and grief  
     he died ;

Though pitied among men, absolved by  
     God,

He could not find forgiveness in himself ;  
 Nor could endure the weight of his own  
     shame.

“Here rests a Mother. But from her  
     I turn 1115  
 And from her grave.—Behold—upon that  
     ridge,

That, stretching boldly from the moun-  
     tain side,

Carries into the centre of the vale  
 Its rocks and woods—the Cottage where  
     she dwelt ;

And where yet dwells her faithful Partner,  
     left 1120

(Full eight years past) the solitary prop

Of many helpless Children. I begin  
 With words that might be prelude to  
     a tale

Of sorrow and dejection ; but I feel  
 No sadness, when I think of what mine  
     eyes 1125

See daily in that happy family.  
 —Bright garland form they for the pen-  
     sive brow

Of their undrooping Father's widowhood,  
 Those six fair Daughters, budding yet—  
     not one,

Not one of all the band, a full-blown  
     flower. 1130

Deprest, and desolate of soul, as once  
 That Father was, and filled with anxious  
     fear,

Now, by experience taught, he stands  
     assured,

That God, who takes away, yet takes not  
     half

Of what he seems to take ; or gives it  
     back, 1135

Not to our prayer, but far beyond our  
     prayer ;

He gives it—the boon produce of a soil  
 Which our endeavours have refused to till,  
 And hope hath never watered. The Abode,  
 Whose grateful owner can attest these  
     truths, 1140

Even were the object nearer to our sight,  
 Would seem in no distinction to surpass  
 The rudest habitations. Ye might think  
 That it had sprung self-raised from earth,  
     or grown

Out of the living rock, to be adorned 1145  
 By nature only ; but, if thither led,  
 Ye would discover, then, a studious work  
 Of many fancies, prompting many hands.

“Brought from the woods the honey-  
     suckle twines

Around the porch, and seems, in that  
     trim place, 1150

A plant no longer wild ; the cultured rose  
 There blossoms, strong in health, and will  
     be soon

Roof-high ; the wild pink crowns the  
     garden-wall,

And with the flowers are intermingled  
     stones

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>             Sparry and bright, rough scatterings of<br/>                 the hills. 1155<br/>             These ornaments, that fade not with the<br/>                 year,<br/>             A hardy Girl continues to provide;<br/>             Who, mounting fearlessly the rocky<br/>                 heights,<br/>             Her Father's prompt attendant, does for<br/>                 him<br/>             All that a boy could do, but with delight<br/>             More keen and prouder daring; yet hath<br/>                 she, 1161<br/>             Within the garden, like the rest, a bed<br/>             For her own flowers and favourite herbs,<br/>                 a space,<br/>             By sacred charter, holden for her use.<br/>             —These, and whatever else the garden<br/>                 bears 1165<br/>             Of fruit or flower, permission asked or not,<br/>             I freely gather; and my leisure draws<br/>             A not unfrequent pastime from the hum<br/>             Of bees around their range of sheltered<br/>                 hives<br/>             Busy in that enclosure; while the rill,<br/>             That sparkling thrids the rocks, attunes<br/>                 his voice 1171<br/>             To the pure course of human life which<br/>                 there<br/>             Flows on in solitude. But, when the<br/>                 gloom           </p> | <p>             Of night is falling round my steps, then<br/>                 most<br/>             This Dwelling charms me; often I stop<br/>                 short, 1175<br/>             (Who could refrain?) and feed by stealth<br/>                 my sight<br/>             With prospect of the company within,<br/>             Laid open through the blazing window:—<br/>                 there<br/>             I see the eldest Daughter at her wheel<br/>             Spinning amain, as if to overtake 1180<br/>             The never-halting time; or, in her turn,<br/>             Teaching some Novice of the sisterhood<br/>             That skill in this or other household<br/>                 work,<br/>             Which, from her Father's honoured hand,<br/>                 herself,<br/>             While she was yet a little-one, had<br/>                 learned. 1185<br/>             Mild Man! he is not gay, but they are<br/>                 gay;<br/>             And the whole house seems filled with<br/>                 gaiety.<br/>             —Thrice happy, then, the Mother may be<br/>                 deemed,<br/>             The Wife, from whose consolatory grave<br/>             I turned, that ye in mind might witness<br/>                 where, 1190<br/>             And how, her Spirit yet survives on<br/>                 earth!"           </p> |
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## BOOK SEVENTH.

### THE CHURCHYARD AMONG THE MOUNTAINS.—(CONTINUED).

#### ARGUMENT.

Impression of these Narratives upon the Author's mind.—Pastor invited to give account of certain Graves that lie apart.—Clergyman and his Family.—Fortunate influence of change of situation.—Activity in extreme old age.—Another Clergyman, a character of resolute Virtue.—Lamentations over mis-directed applause.—Instance of less exalted excellence in a deaf man.—Elevated character of a blind man.—Reflection upon Blindness.—Interrupted by a Peasant who passes—his animal cheerfulness and careless vivacity.—He occasions a digression on the fall of beautiful and interesting Trees.—A female Infant's Grave.—Joy at her Birth.—Sorrow at her Departure.—A youthful Peasant—his patriotic enthusiasm and distinguished qualities—his untimely death.—Exultation of the Wanderer, as a patriot, in this Picture.—Solitary how affected.—Monument of a Knight.—Traditions concerning him.—Peroration of the Wanderer on the transitoriness of things and the revolutions of society.—Hints at his own past Calling.—Thanks the Pastor.

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| <p>WHILE thus from theme to theme the<br/>             Historian passed,<br/>         The words he uttered, and the scene that<br/>             lay<br/>         Before our eyes, awakened in my mind<br/>         Vivid remembrance of those long-past<br/>             hours;<br/>         When, in the hollow of some shadowy<br/>             vale, 5<br/>         (What time the splendour of the setting<br/>             sun<br/>         Lay beautiful on Snowdon's sovereign<br/>             brow, •<br/>         On Cader Idris, or huge Penmanmaur)<br/>         A wandering Youth, I listened with de-<br/>             light<br/>         To pastoral melody or warlike air, 10<br/>         Drawn from the chords of the ancient<br/>             British harp<br/>         By some accomplished Master, while he<br/>             sate<br/>         Amid the quiet of the green recess,<br/>         And there did inexhaustibly dispense<br/>         An interchange of soft or solemn tunes, 15</p> | <p>Tender or blithe; now, as the varying<br/>             mood<br/>         Of his own spirit urged,—now, as a voice<br/>         From youth or maiden, or some honoured<br/>             chief<br/>         Of his compatriot villagers (that hung<br/>         Around him, drinking in the impassioned<br/>             notes 20<br/>         Of the time-hallowed minstrelsy) required<br/>         For their heart's ease or pleasure. Strains<br/>             of power<br/>         Were they, to seize and occupy the sense;<br/>         But to a higher mark than song can reach<br/>         Rose this pure eloquence. And, when the<br/>             stream 25<br/>         Which overflowed the soul was passed<br/>             away,<br/>         A consciousness remained that it had left,<br/>         Deposited upon the silent shore<br/>         Of memory, images and precious thoughts,<br/>         That shall not die, and cannot be de-<br/>             stroyed. 30<br/>         “These grassy heaps lie amicably close,”</p> |
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Said I, "like surges heaving in the wind  
 Along the surface of a mountain pool:  
 Whence comes it, then, that yonder we  
     behold  
 Five graves, and only five, that rise to-  
     gether 35  
 Unsociably sequestered, and encroaching  
 On the smooth playground of the village-  
     school?"

The Vicar answered,—“No disdainful  
     pride  
 In them who rest beneath, nor any course  
 Of strange or tragic accident, hath helped  
 To place those hillocks in that lonely  
     guise. 41  
 —Once more look forth, and follow with  
     your sight  
 The length of road that from yon moun-  
     tain's base  
 Through bare enclosures stretches, 'till  
     its line  
 Is lost within a little tuft of trees; 45  
 Then, reappearing in a moment, quits  
 The cultured fields; and up the heathy  
     waste,  
 Mounts, as you see, in mazes serpentine,  
 Led towards an easy outlet of the vale.  
 That little shady spot, that sylvan tuft, 50  
 By which the road is hidden, also hides  
 A cottage from our view; though I discern  
 (Ye scarcely can) amid its sheltering trees  
 The smokeless chimney-top.—

    All unembowered  
 And naked stood that lowly Parsonage 55  
 (For such in truth it is, and appertains  
 To a small Chapel in the vale beyond)  
 When hither came its last Inhabitant.  
 Rough and forbidding were the choicest  
     roads  
 By which our northern wilds could then  
     be crossed; 60  
 And into most of these secluded vales  
 Was no access for wain, heavy or light.  
 So, at his dwelling-place the Priest ar-  
     rived  
 With store of household goods, in pan-  
     niers slung  
 On sturdy horses graced with jingling  
     bells, 65  
 And on the back of more ignoble beast;

That, with like burthen of effects most  
     prized  
 Or easiest carried, closed the motley train.  
 Young was I then, a schoolboy of eight  
     years;  
 But still, methinks, I see them as they  
     passed 70  
 In order, drawing toward their wished-  
     for home.  
 —Rocked by the motion of a trusty ass  
 Two ruddy children hung, a well-poised  
     freight,  
 Each in his basket nodding drowsily;  
 Their bonnets, I remember, wreathed with  
     flowers, 75  
 Which told it was the pleasant month of  
     June;  
 And, close behind, the comely Matron  
     rode,  
 A woman of soft speech and gracious  
     smile,  
 And with a lady's mien.—From far they  
     came,  
 Even from Northumbrian hills; yet theirs  
     had been 80  
 A merry journey, rich in pastime, cheered  
 By music, prank, and laughter-stirring  
     jest;  
 And freak put on, and arch word dropped—  
     to swell  
 The cloud of fancy and uncouth surmise  
 That gathered round the slowly-moving  
     train. 85  
 —‘Whence do they come? and with what  
     errand charged?  
 Belong they to the foretune-telling tribe  
 Who pitch their tents under the green-  
     wood tree?  
 Or Strollers are they, furnished to enact  
 Fair Rosamond, and the Children of the  
     Wood, 90  
 And, by that whiskered tabby's aid, set  
     forth  
 The lucky venture of sage Whittington,  
 When the next village hears the show  
     announced  
 By blast of trumpet?’ Plenteous was the  
     growth  
 Of such conjectures, overheard, or seen 95  
 On many a staring countenance portrayed  
 Of boor or burgher, as they marched along.

And more than once their steadiness of  
face

Was put to proof, and exercise supplied  
To their inventive humour, by stern looks,  
And questions in authoritative tone, 101  
From some staid guardian of the public  
peace,

Checking the sober steed on which he  
rode,

In his suspicious wisdom; oftener still,  
By notice indirect, or blunt demand 105  
From traveller halting in his own despite,  
A simple curiosity to ease:

Of which adventures, that beguiled and  
cheered

Their grave migration, the good pair  
would tell,

With undiminished glee, in hoary age. 110

“A Priest he was by function; but his  
course

From his youth up, and high as man-  
hood's noon,

(The hour of life to which he then was  
brought)

Had been irregular, I might say, wild;  
By books unsteadied, by his pastoral care  
Too little checked. An active, ardent  
mind; 116

A fancy pregnant with resource and  
scheme

To cheat the sadness of a rainy day;  
Hands apt for all ingenious arts and  
games;

A generous spirit, and a body strong 120  
To cope with stoutest champions of the  
bowl;

Had earned for him sure welcome, and  
the rights

Of a prized visitant, in the jolly hall  
Of country 'squire; or at the statelier  
board

Of duke or earl, from scenes of courtly  
pomp 125

Withdrawn,—to while away the summer  
hours

In condescension among rural guests.

“With these high comrades he had  
revelled long,

Frolicked industriously, a simple Clerk

By hopes of coming patronage beguiled  
Till the heart sickened. So, each loftier  
aim 131

Abandoning and all his showy friends,  
For a life's stay (slender it was, but sure)  
He turned to this secluded chapelry;

That had been offered to his doubtful  
choice 135

By an unthought-of patron. Bleak and  
bare

They found the cottage, their allotted  
home;

Naked without, and rude within; a spot  
With which the Cure not long had been  
endowed:

And far remote the chapel stood,—re-  
mote, 140

And, from his Dwelling, unapproachable,  
Save through a gap high in the hills, an  
opening

Shadeless and shelterless, by driving  
showers

Frequented, and beset with howling  
winds.

Yet cause was none, whate'er regret might  
hang 145

On his own mind, to quarrel with the  
choice

Or the necessity that fixed him here;  
Apart from old temptations, and con-  
strained

To punctual labour in his sacred charge.  
See him a constant preacher to the poor!

And visiting, though not with saintly  
zeal, 151

Yet, when need was, with no reluctant  
will,

The sick in body, or distress in mind;  
And, by as salutary change, compelled

To rise from timely sleep, and meet the  
day 155

With no engagement, in his thoughts,  
more proud

Or splendid than his garden could afford,  
His fields, or mountains by the heath-  
cock ranged,

Or the wild brooks; from which he now  
returned

Contented to partake the quiet meal 160  
Of his own board, where sat his gentle  
Mate

And three fair Children, plentifully fed  
Though simply, from their little house-  
hold farm;

Nor wanted timely treat of fish or fowl  
By nature yielded to his practised  
hand;— 165

To help the small but certain comings-in  
Of that spare benefice. Yet not the less  
Theirs was a hospitable board, and theirs  
A charitable door.

So days and years  
Passed on;—the inside of that rugged  
house 170

Was trimmed and brightened by the  
Matron's care,

And gradually enriched with things of  
price,

Which might be lacked for use or orna-  
ment.

What, though no soft and costly sofa  
there

Insidiously stretched out its lazy length,  
And no vain mirror glittered upon the  
walls, 176

Yet were the windows of the low abode  
By shutters weather-fenced, which at  
once

Repelled the storm and deadened its loud  
roar.

Their snow-white curtains hung in decent  
folds; 180

Tough moss, and long-enduring mountain-  
plants,

That creep along the ground with sinuous  
trail,

Were nicely braided; and composed a  
work

Like Indian mats, that with appropriate  
grace

Lay at the threshold and the inner doors;  
And a fair carpet, woven of homespun  
wool 186

But tintured daintily with florid hues,  
For seemliness and warmth, on festal  
days,

Covered the smooth blue slabs of moun-  
tain-stone

With which the parlour-floor, in simplest  
guise 190

Of pastoral homesteads, had been long  
inlaid.

"Those pleasing works the Housewife's  
skill produced:

Meanwhile the unsedentary Master's hand  
Was busier with his task—to rid, to plant,  
To rear for food, for shelter, and delight;  
A thriving covert! And when wishes,  
formed 196

In youth, and sanctioned by the riper  
mind,

Restored me to my native valley, here  
To end my days; well pleased was I to  
see

The once-bare cottage, on the mountain-  
side, 200

Screen'd from assault of every bitter  
blast;

While the dark shadows of the summer  
leaves

Danced in the breeze, chequering its  
mossy roof.

Time, which had thus afforded willing  
help

To beautify with nature's fairest growths  
This rustic tenement, had gently shed, 206

Upon its Master's frame, a wintry grace;  
The comeliness of unenfeebled age.

"But how could I say, gently? for he  
still

Retained a flashing eye, a burning palm,  
A stirring foot, a head which beat at  
nights 211

Upon its pillow with a thousand schemes.  
Few likings had he dropped, few plea-  
sures lost;

Generous and charitable, prompt to serve;  
And still his harsher passions kept their  
hold— 215

Anger and indignation. Still he loved  
The sound of titled names, and talked in  
glee

Of long-past banquetings with high-born  
friends:

Then, from those lulling fits of vain de-  
light 219

Uproused by recollected injury, railed  
At their false ways disdainfully,—and oft  
In bitterness, and with a threatening eye

Of fire, incensed beneath its hoary brow.  
—Those transports, with staid looks of  
pure good-will,

And with soft smile, his consort would  
reprove. 225  
She, far behind him in the race of years,  
Yet keeping her first mildness, was ad-  
vanced

Far nearer, in the habit of her soul,  
To that still region whither all are bound.  
Him might we liken to the setting sun 230  
As seen not seldom on some gusty day,  
Struggling and bold, and shining from  
the west

With an inconstant and unmellowed  
light;

She was a soft attendant cloud, that hung  
As if with wish to veil the restless orb;  
From which it did itself imbibe a ray 236  
Of pleasing lustre.—But no more of this;  
I better love to sprinkle on the sod  
That now divides the pair, or rather say,  
That still unites them, praises, like hea-  
ven's dew, 240

Without reserve descending upon both.

“Our very first in eminence of years  
This old Man stood, the patriarch of the  
Vale!

And, to his unmolested mansion, death  
Had never come, through space of forty  
years; 245

Sparing both old and young in that  
abode.

Suddenly then they disappeared: not  
twice

Had summer scorched the fields; not  
twice had fallen,

On those high peaks, the first autumnal  
snow,

Before the greedy visiting was closed, 250  
And the long-privileged house left empty  
—swept

As by a plague. Yet no rapacious plague  
Had been among them; all was gentle  
death,

One after one, with intervals of peace.

A happy consummation! an accord 255  
Sweet, perfect, to be wished for! save  
that here

Was something which to mortal sense  
might sound

Like harshness,—that the old grey-headed  
Sire,

The oldest, he was taken last, survived  
When the meek Partner of his age, his Son,  
His Daughter, and that late and high-  
prized gift, 261  
His little smiling Grandchild, were no  
more.

“All gone, all vanished! he deprived  
and bare,

How will he face the remnant of his life?  
What will become of him?’ we said, and  
mused 265

In sad conjectures—‘Shall we meet him  
now

Haunting with rod and line the craggy  
brooks?

Or shall we overhear him, as we pass,  
Striving to entertain the lonely hours  
With music?’ (for he had not ceased to  
touch 270

The harp or viol which himself had  
framed,

For their sweet purposes, with perfect  
skill.)

‘What titles will he keep? will he remain  
Musician, gardener, builder, mechanist,  
A planter, and a rearer from the seed? 275  
A man of hope and forward-looking mind  
Even to the last!’—Such was he, un-  
subdued.

But Heaven was gracious; yet a little  
while,

And this Survivor, with his cheerful  
throng

Of open projects, and his inward hoard  
Of unsunned griefs, too many and too  
keen, 281

Was overcome by unexpected sleep,  
In one blest moment. Like a shadow  
thrown

Softly and lightly from a passing cloud,  
Death fell upon him, while reclined he  
lay 285

For noontide solace on the summer grass,  
The warm lap of his mother earth: and so,  
Their lenient term of separation past,  
That family (whose graves you there  
behold)

By yet a higher privilege once more 290  
Were gathered to each other.”

Calm of mind

And silence waited on these closing words;  
 Until the Wanderer (whether moved by fear  
 Lest in those passages of life were some  
 That might have touched the sick heart  
 of his Friend 295  
 Too nearly, or intent to reinforce  
 His own firm spirit in degree deprest  
 By tender sorrow for our mortal state)  
 Thus silence broke:—"Behold a thought-  
 less Man  
 From vice and premature decay pre-  
 served 300  
 By useful habits, to a fitter soil  
 Transplanted ere too late.—The hermit,  
 lodged  
 Amid the untrodden desert, tells his  
 beads,  
 With each repeating its allotted prayer,  
 And thus divides and thus relieves the  
 time; 305  
 Smooth task, with *his* compared, whose  
 mind could string,  
 Not scantily, bright minutes on the  
 thread  
 Of keen domestic anguish; and beguile  
 A solitude, unchosen, unprofessed;  
 Till gentlest death released him.  
 Far from us  
 Be the desire—too curiously to ask 311  
 How much of this is but the blind  
 result  
 Of cordial spirits and vital temperament,  
 And what to higher powers is justly  
 due.  
 But you, Sir, know that in a neighbouring  
 vale 315  
 A Priest abides before whose life such  
 doubts  
 Fall to the ground; whose gifts of nature  
 lie  
 Retired from notice, lost in attributes  
 Of reason, honourably effaced by debts  
 Which her poor treasure-house is content  
 to owe, 320  
 And conquests over her dominion gained,  
 To which her frowardness must needs  
 submit.  
 In this one Man is shown a temperance—  
 proof

Against all trials; industry severe  
 And constant as the motion of the day;  
 Stern self-denial round him spread, with  
 shade 326  
 That might be deemed forbidding, did  
 not there  
 All generous feelings flourish and rejoice;  
 Forbearance, charity in deed and thought,  
 And resolution competent to take 330  
 Out of the bosom of simplicity  
 All that her holy customs recommend,  
 And the best ages of the world prescribe.  
 —Preaching, administering, in every work  
 Of his sublime vocation, in the walks 335  
 Of worldly intercourse between man and  
 man,  
 And in his humble dwelling, he appears  
 A labourer, with moral virtue girt,  
 With spiritual graces, like a glory,  
 crowned."  
 "Doubt can be none," the Pastor said,  
 "for whom 340  
 This portraiture is sketched. The great,  
 the good,  
 The well-beloved, the fortunate, the  
 wise,—  
 These titles emperors and chiefs have  
 borne,  
 Honour assumed or given: and him, the  
 WONDERFUL,  
 Our simple shepherds, speaking from the  
 heart, 345  
 Deservedly have styled.—From his abode  
 In a dependent chapelry that lies  
 Behind yon hill, a poor and rugged wild,  
 Which in his soul he lovingly embraced,  
 And, having once espoused, would never  
 quit; 350  
 Into its graveyard will ere long be borne  
 That lowly, great, good Man. A simple  
 stone  
 May cover him; and by its help, per-  
 chance,  
 A century shall hear his name pro-  
 nounced,  
 With images attendant on the sound; 355  
 Then, shall the slowly-gathering twilight  
 close  
 In utter night; and of his course remain  
 No cognizable vestiges, no more

Than of this breath, which shapes itself  
in words  
To speak of him, and instantly dis-  
solves." 360

The Pastor pressed by thoughts which  
round his theme  
Still linger'd, after a brief pause, resumed;  
"Noise is there not enough in doleful  
war,  
But that the heaven-born poet must stand  
forth,  
And lend the echoes of his sacred shell,  
To multiply and aggravate the din? 366  
Pangs are there not enough in hopeless  
love—

And, in requited passion, all too much  
Of turbulence, anxiety, and fear— 369  
But that the minstrel of the rural shade  
Must tune his pipe, insidiously to nurse  
The perturbation in the suffering breast,  
And propagate its kind, far as he may?  
—Ah who (and with such rapture as befits  
The hallowed theme) will rise and cele-  
brate 375  
The good man's purposes and deeds;  
retrace

His struggles, his discomfitures deplore,  
His triumphs hail, and glorify his end;  
That virtue, like the fumes and vapoury  
clouds  
Through fancy's heat redounding in the  
brain, 380

And like the soft infections of the heart,  
By charm of measured words may spread  
o'er field,  
Hamlet, and town; and piety survive  
Upon the lips of men in hall or bower;  
Not for reproof, but high and warm  
delights 385

And grave encouragement, by song in-  
spired?  
—Vain thought! but wherefore murmur  
or repine?

The memory of the just survives in  
heaven:  
And, without sorrow, will the ground  
receive 389  
That venerable clay. Meanwhile the best  
Of what lies here confines us to degrees  
In excellence less difficult to reach,

And milder worth: nor need we travel far  
From those to whom our last regards  
were paid,  
For such example.

Almost at the root  
Of that tall pine, the shadow of whose  
bare 396  
And slender stem, while here I sit at eve,  
Oft stretches toward me, like a long  
straight path  
Traced faintly in the greensward; there,  
beneath  
A plain blue stone, a gentle Dalesman  
lies, 400  
From whom, in early childhood, was  
withdrawn

The precious gift of hearing. He grew up  
From year to year in loneliness of soul;  
And this deep mountain-valley was to him  
Soundless, with all its streams. The bird  
of dawn 405  
Did never rouse this Cottager from sleep  
With startling summons; not for his  
delight

The vernal cuckoo shouted; not for him  
Murmured the labouring bee. When  
stormy winds  
Were working the broad bosom of the  
lake 410  
Into a thousand thousand sparkling  
waves,

Rocking the trees, or driving cloud on  
cloud  
Along the sharp edge of yon lofty crags,  
The agitated scene before his eye  
Was silent as a picture: evermore 415  
Were all things silent, wheresoe'er he  
moved.

Yet, by the solace of his own pure  
thoughts  
Upheld, he duteously pursued the round  
Of rural labours; the steep mountain-side  
Ascended, with his staff and faithful  
dog; 420  
The plough he guided, and the scythe he  
swayed;

And the ripe corn before his sickle fell  
Among the jocund reapers. For himself,  
All watchful and industrious as he was,  
He wrought not: neither field nor flock  
he owned: 425

No wish for wealth had place within his  
mind;  
Nor husband's love, nor father's hope or  
care.

“Though born a younger brother, need  
was none  
That from the floor of his paternal home  
He should depart, to plant himself anew.  
And when, mature in manhood, he be-  
held 431  
His parents laid in earth, no loss ensued  
Of rights to him; but he remained well  
pleased,  
By the pure bond of independent love,  
An inmate of a second family; 435  
The fellow-labourer and friend of him  
To whom the small inheritance had fallen.  
—Nor deem that his mild presence was a  
weight  
That pressed upon his brother's house;  
for books  
Were ready comrades whom he could not  
tire; 440  
Of whose society the blameless Man  
Was never satiate. Their familiar voice,  
Even to old age, with unabated charm  
Beguiled his leisure hours; refreshed his  
thoughts;  
Beyond its natural elevation raised 445  
His introverted spirit; and bestowed  
Upon his life an outward dignity  
Which all acknowledged. The dark  
winter night,  
The stormy day, each had its own re-  
source;  
Song of the muses, sage historic tale, 450  
Science severe, or word of holy Writ  
Announcing immortality and joy  
To the assembled spirits of just men  
Made perfect, and from injury secure.  
—Thus soothed at home, thus busy in the  
field, 455  
To no perverse suspicion he gave way,  
No languor, peevishness, nor vain com-  
plaint:  
And they, who were about him, did not  
fail  
In reverence, or in courtesy; they prized  
His gentle manners: and his peaceful  
smiles, 460

The gleams of his slow-varying counte-  
nance,  
Were met with answering sympathy and  
love.

“At length, when sixty years and five  
were told,  
A slow disease insensibly consumed  
The powers of nature: and a few short  
steps 465  
Of friends and kindred bore him from his  
home  
(Yon cottage shaded by the woody crags)  
To the profounder stillness of the grave.  
—Nor was his funeral denied the grace  
Of many tears, virtuous and thoughtful  
grief; 470  
Heart-sorrow rendered sweet by gratitude,  
And now that monumental stone pre-  
serves  
His name, and unambitiously relates  
How long, and by what kindly outward  
aids, 474  
And in what pure contentedness of mind,  
The sad privation was by him endured.  
—And yon tall pine-tree, whose composing  
sound  
Was wasted on the good Man's living ear,  
Hath now its own peculiar sanctity;  
And, at the touch of every wandering  
breeze, 480  
Murmurs, not idly, o'er his peaceful grave.

“Soul-cheering Light, most bountiful  
of things!  
Guide of our way, mysterious comforter!  
Whose sacred influence, spread through  
earth and heaven,  
We all too thanklessly participate, 485  
Thy gifts were utterly withheld from him  
Whose place of rest is near yon ivied  
porch.  
Yet, of the wild brooks ask if he com-  
plained;  
Ask of the channelled rivers if they held  
A safer, easier, more determined, course.  
What terror doth it strike into the mind  
To think of one, blind and alone, ad-  
vancing 492  
Straight toward some precipice's airy  
brink!

But, timely warned, *He* would have stayed  
 his steps,  
 Protected, say enlightened, by his ear;  
 And on the very edge of vacancy 496  
 Not more endangered than a man whose  
 eye  
 Beholds the gulf beneath.—No floweret  
 blooms  
 Throughout the lofty range of these rough  
 hills,  
 Nor in the woods, that could from him  
 conceal 500  
 Its birthplace; none whose figure did  
 not live  
 Upon his touch. The bowels of the  
 earth  
 Enriched with knowledge his industrious  
 mind;  
 The ocean paid him tribute from the  
 stores  
 Lodged in her bosom; and, by science  
 led, 505  
 His genius mounted to the plains of  
 heaven.  
 —Methinks I see him—how his eye-balls  
 rolled,  
 Beneath his ample brow, in darkness  
 paired,—  
 But each instinct with spirit; and the  
 frame  
 Of the whole countenance alive with  
 thought, 510  
 Fancy, and understanding; while the  
 voice  
 Discoursed of natural or moral truth  
 With eloquence, and such authentic  
 power,  
 That, in his presence, humbler knowledge  
 stood  
 Abashed, and tender pity overawed.” 515

“A noble—and, to unreflecting minds,  
 A marvellous spectacle,” the Wanderer  
 said,  
 “Beings like these present! But proof  
 abounds  
 Upon the earth that faculties, which seem  
 Extinguished, do not, *therefore*, cease  
 to be. 520  
 And to the mind among her powers of  
 sense

This transfer is permitted,—not alone  
 That the bereft their recompense may  
 win;  
 But for remoter purposes of love  
 And charity; nor last nor least for  
 this, 525  
 That to the imagination may be given  
 A type and shadow of an awful truth;  
 How, likewise, under sufferance divine,  
 Darkness is banished from the realms of  
 death,  
 By man’s imperishable spirit, quelled. 530  
 Unto the men who see not as we see  
 Futurity was thought, in ancient times,  
 To be laid open, and they prophesied.  
 And know we not that from the blind  
 have flowed  
 The highest, holiest, raptures of the  
 lyre; 535  
 And wisdom married to immortal verse?”

Among the humbler Worthies, at our  
 feet  
 Lying insensible to human praise,  
 Love, or regret,—*whose* lineaments would  
 next  
 Have been portrayed, I guess not; but it  
 chanced 540  
 That, near the quiet churchyard where  
 we sate,  
 A team of horses, with a ponderous freight  
 Pressing behind, adown a rugged slope,  
 Whose sharp descent confounded their  
 array,  
 Came at that moment, ringing noisily. 545

“Here,” said the Pastor, “do we muse,  
 and mourn  
 The waste of death; and lo! the giant oak  
 Stretched on his bier—that massy timber  
 wain;  
 Nor fail to note the Man who guides the  
 team.”

He was a peasant of the lowest class: 550  
 Grey locks profusely round his temples  
 hung  
 In clustering curls, like ivy, which the  
 bite  
 Of winter cannot thin; the fresh air  
 lodged

Within his cheek, as light within a cloud;  
And he returned our greeting with a  
smile. 555

When he had passed, the Solitary spake;  
"A Man he seems of cheerful yesterdays  
And confident to-morrows; with a face  
Not worldly-minded, for it bears too much  
Of Nature's impress,—gaiety and health,  
Freedom and hope; but keen, withal, and  
shrewd. 561

His gestures note,—and hark! his tones  
of voice  
Are all vivacious as his mien and looks."

The Pastor answered, "You have read  
him well.

Year after year is added to his store 565  
With *silent* increase: summers, winters—  
past,

Past or to come; yea, boldly might I say,  
Ten summers and ten winters of a space  
That lies beyond life's ordinary bounds,  
Upon his sprightly vigour cannot fix 570  
The obligation of an anxious mind,  
A pride in having, or a fear to lose;  
Possessed like outskirts of some large  
domain,

By any one more thought of than by him  
Who holds the land in fee, its careless  
lord! 575

Yet is the creature rational, endowed  
With foresight; hears, too, every sabbath  
day,

The Christian promise with attentive ear;  
Nor will, I trust, the Majesty of Heaven  
Reject the incense offered up by him, 580  
Though of the kind which beasts and  
birds present

In grove or pasture; cheerfulness of soul,  
From trepidation and repining free.  
How many scrupulous worshippers fall  
down

Upon their knees, and daily homage  
pay 585  
Less worthy, less religious even, than his!

"This qualified respect, the old Man's  
due,  
Is paid without reluctance; but in truth,"  
(Said the good Vicar with a fond half-  
smile)

"I feel at times a motion of despite 590  
Towards one, whose bold contrivances and  
skill,

As you have seen, bear such conspicuous  
part

In works of *havoc*; taking from these  
vales,

One after one, their proudest ornaments.  
Full off his doings leave me to deplore 595

Tall ash-tree, sown by winds, by vapours  
nursed,

In the dry crannies of the pendent rocks;  
Light birch, aloft upon the horizon's edge,  
A veil of glory for the ascending moon;

And oak whose roots by noontide dew  
were damped, 600

And on whose forehead inaccessible  
The raven lodged in safety.—Many a ship  
Launched into Morecambe-bay, to *him*

hath owed  
Her strong knee-timbers, and the mast  
that bears

The loftiest of her pendants; He, from  
park 605

Or forest, fetched the enormous axle-tree  
That whirls (how slow itself!) ten thou-  
sand spindles:

And the vast engine labouring in the mine,  
Content with meaner prowess, must have  
lacked

The trunk and body of its marvellous  
strength, 610

If his undaunted enterprise had failed  
Among the mountain coves.

Yon household fir,  
A guardian planted to fence off the blast,  
But towering high the roof above, as if  
Its humble destination were forgot— 615

That sycamore, which annually holds  
Within its shade, as in a stately tent<sup>1</sup>  
On all sides open to the fanning breeze,  
A grave assemblage, seated while they  
shear

The fleece-encumbered flock—the JOYFUL  
ELM, 620

Around whose trunk the maidens dance  
in May—

And the LORD'S OAK—would plead their  
several rights

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 933.

In vain, if he were master of their fate;  
His sentence to the axe would doom  
them all.

But, green in age and lusty as he is, 625  
And promising to keep his hold on earth  
Less, as might seem, in rivalry with  
men.

Than with the forest's more enduring  
growth,

His own appointed hour will come at  
last;

And, like the haughty Spoilers of the  
world, 630

This keen Destroyer, in his turn, must  
fall.

"Now from the living pass we once  
again:

From Age," the Priest continued, "turn  
your thoughts;

From Age, that often unlamented drops,  
And mark that daisied hillock, three  
spans long! 635

—Seven lusty Sons sate daily round the  
board

Of Gold-rill side; and, when the hope  
had ceased

Of other progeny, a Daughter then  
Was given, the crowning bounty of the  
whole;

And so acknowledged with a tremulous  
joy 640

Felt to the centre of that heavenly calm  
With which by nature every mother's soul  
Is stricken in the moment when her throes  
Are ended, and her ears have heard the  
cry

Which tells her that a living child is  
born; 645

And she lies conscious, in a blissful rest,  
That the dread storm is weathered by  
them both.

"The Father—him at this unlooked-  
for gift

A bolder transport seizes. From the side  
Of his bright hearth, and from his open  
door, 650

Day after day the gladness is diffused  
To all that come, almost to all that pass;  
Invited, summoned, to partake the cheer

Spread on the never-empty board, and  
drink

Health and good wishes to his new-born  
girl, 655

From cups replenished by his joyous  
hand.

—Those seven fair brothers variously were  
moved

Each by the thoughts best suited to his  
years:

But most of all and with most thankful  
mind

The hoary grandsire felt himself enriched;  
A happiness that ebbed not, but remained  
To fill the total measure of his soul!

—From the low tenement, his own abode,  
Whither, as to a little private cell,

He had withdrawn from bustle, care, and  
noise, 665

To spend the sabbath of old age in peace,  
Once every day he duteously repaired

To rock the cradle of the slumbering babe:  
For in that female infant's name he heard  
The silent name of his departed wife;

Heart-stirring music! hourly heard that  
name; 671

Full blest he was, 'Another Margaret  
Green,'

Oft did he say, 'was come to Gold-rill  
side.'

"Oh! pang unthought of, as the pre-  
cious boon

Itself had been unlooked-for; oh! dire  
stroke 675

Of desolating anguish for them all!

—Just as the Child could totter on the  
floor,

And, by some friendly finger's help up-  
stayed

Ranged round the garden walk, while she  
perchance

Was catching at some novelty of spring,  
Ground-flower, or glossy insect from its  
cell 681

Drawn by the sunshine—at that hopeful  
season

The winds of March, smiting insidiously,  
Raised in the tender passage of the throat

Viewless obstruction; whence, all unfore-  
warned, 685

The household lost their pride and soul's  
delight.

—But time hath power to soften all re-  
grets,

And prayer and thought can bring to  
worst distress

Due resignation. Therefore, though some  
tears

Fail not to spring from either Parent's  
eye 690

Oft as they hear of sorrow like their own,  
Yet this departed Little-one, too long  
The innocent troubler of their quiet, sleeps  
In what may now be called a peaceful  
bed.

“On a bright day—so calm and bright,  
it seemed 695

To us, with our sad spirits, heavenly-  
fair—

These mountains echoed to an unknown  
sound;

A volley, thrice repeated o'er the Corse  
Let down into the hollow of that grave,  
Whose shelving sides are red with naked  
mould. 700

Ye rains of April, duly wet this earth!  
Spare, burning sun of midsummer, these  
sods,

That they may knit together, and there-  
with

Our thoughts unite in kindred quietness!  
Nor so the Valley shall forget her loss. 705  
Dear Youth, by young and old alike be-  
loved,

To me as precious as my own!—Green  
herbs

May creep (I wish that they would softly  
creep)

Over thy last abode, and we may pass  
Reminded less imperiously of thee;— 710  
The ridge itself may sink into the breast  
Of earth, the great abyss, and be no more;  
Yet shall not thy remembrance leave our  
hearts,

Thy image disappear!

The Mountain-ash 714  
No eye can overlook, when 'mid a grove  
Of yet unfaded trees she lifts her head  
Decked with autumnal berries, that out-  
shine

Spring's richest blossoms; and ye may  
have marked,

By a brook-side or solitary tarn,  
How she her station doth adorn: the  
pool 720

Glowes at her feet, and all the gloomy  
rocks

Are brightened round her. In his native  
vale

Such and so glorious did this Youth  
appear;

A sight that kindled pleasure in all hearts  
By his ingenuous beauty, by the gleam 725  
Of his fair eyes, by his capacious brow,  
By all the graces with which nature's hand  
Had lavishly arrayed him. As old bards  
Tell in their idle songs of wandering gods,  
Pan or Apollo, veiled in human form: 730  
Yet, like the sweet-breathed violet of the  
shade,

Discovered in their own despite to sense  
Of mortals (if such fables without blame  
May find chance-mention on this sacred  
ground)—

So, through a simple rustic garb's dis-  
guise, 735

And through the impediment of rural  
cares,

In him revealed a scholar's genius shone;  
And so, not wholly hidden from men's  
sight,

In him the spirit of a hero walked  
Our unpretending valley.—How the quoit  
Whizzed from the Stripling's arm! If  
touched by him, 741

The inglorious football mounted to the  
pitch

Of the lark's flight,—or shaped a rainbow  
curve,

Aloft, in prospect of the shouting field!  
The indefatigable fox had learned 745

To dread his perseverance in the chase.  
With admiration would he lift his eyes

To the wide-ruling eagle, and his hand  
Was loth to assault the majesty he loved:

Else had the strongest fastnesses proved  
weak 750

To guard the royal brood. The sailing  
glead,

The wheeling swallow, and the darting  
snipe,

The sportive sea-gull dancing with the waves,  
 And cautious water-fowl, from distant climes,  
 Fixed at their seat, the centre of the Mere, 755  
 Were subject to young Oswald's steady aim,  
 And lived by his forbearance.

From the coast  
 Of France a boastful Tyrant hurled his threats;  
 Our Country marked the preparation vast  
 Of hostile forces; and she called—with voice 760  
 That filled her plains, that reached her utmost shores,  
 And in remotest vales was heard—to arms!

—Then, for the first time, here you might have seen  
 The shepherd's grey to martial scarlet changed,  
 That flashed uncouthly through the woods and fields. 765  
 Ten hardy Striplings, all in bright attire,  
 And graced with shining weapons, weekly marched,

From this lone valley, to a central spot  
 Where, in assemblage with the flower and choice

Of the surrounding district, they might learn 770

The rudiments of war; ten—hardy, strong,

And valiant; but young Oswald, like a chief

And yet a modest comrade, led them forth

From their shy solitude, to face the world,

With a gay confidence and seemly pride;  
 Measuring the soil beneath their happy feet 776

Like Youths released from labour, and yet bound

To most laborious service, though to them  
 A festival of unencumbered ease;

The inner spirit keeping holiday, 780  
 Like vernal ground to sabbath sunshine left.

"Oft have I marked him, at some leisure hour,  
 Stretched on the grass, or seated in the shade,

Among his fellows, while an ample map  
 Before their eyes lay carefully outspread,  
 From which the gallant teacher would discourse, 786

Now pointing this way, and now that.  
 —'Here flows,'

Thus would he say, 'the Rhine, that famous stream!

Eastward, the Danube toward this inland sea,

A mightier river, winds from realm to realm; 790

And, like a serpent, shows his glittering back

Bespotted—with innumerable isles:

Here reigns the Russian, there the Turk; observe

His capital city! Thence, along a tract  
 Of livelier interest to his hopes and fears,  
 His finger moved, distinguishing the spots 796

Where wide-spread conflict then most fiercely raged;

Nor left unstigmatized those fatal fields  
 On which the sons of mighty Germany

Were taught a base submission.—'Here behold 800

A nobler race, the Switzers, and their land,

Vales deeper far than these of ours, huge woods,

And mountains white with everlasting snow!

—And, surely, he, that spake with kindling brow,

Was a true patriot, hopeful as the best  
 Of that young peasantry, who, in our days, 806

Have fought and perished for Helvetia's rights—

Ah, not in vain!—or those who, in old time,

For work of happier issue, to the side  
 Of Tell came trooping from a thousand huts, 810

When he had risen alone! No braver Youth

Descended from Judean heights, to march  
With righteous Joshua; nor appeared in  
arms

When grove was felled, and altar was cast  
down,

And Gideon blew the trumpet, soul-in-  
flamed, 815

And strong in hatred of idolatry."

The Pastor, even as if by these last  
words

Raised from his seat within the chosen  
shade,

Moved towards the grave;—instinctively  
his steps

We followed; and my voice with joy  
exclaimed: 820

"Power to the Oppressors of the world  
is given,

A might of which they dream not. Oh!  
the curse,

To be the awakener of divinest thoughts,  
Father and founder of exalted deeds;

And, to whole nations bound in servile  
straits, 825

The liberal donor of capacities

More than heroic! this to be, nor yet

Have sense of one connatural wish, nor  
yet

Deserve the least return of human thanks;  
Winning no recompense but deadly hate

With pity mixed, astonishment with  
scorn!" 831

When this involuntary strain had  
ceased,

The Pastor said: "So Providence is  
served;

The forked weapon of the skies can send  
illumination into deep, dark holds, 835

Which the mild sunbeam hath not power  
to pierce.

Ye Thrones that have defied remorse, and  
cast

Pity away, soon shall ye quake with *fear*!  
For, not unconscious of the mighty debt

Which to outrageous wrong the sufferer  
owes, 840

Europe, through all her habitable bounds,  
Is thirsting for *their* overthrow, who yet  
Survive, as pagan temples stood of yore,

By horror of their impious rites, pre-  
served;

Are still permitted to extend their pride,  
Like cedars on the top of Lebanon 846  
Darkening the sun.

But less impatient thoughts,  
And love 'all hoping and expecting all,'

This hallowed grave demands, where rests  
in peace

A humble champion of the better cause;  
A Peasant-youth, so call him, for he

asked 851  
No higher name; in whom our country

showed,  
As in a favourite son, most beautiful.

In spite of vice, and misery, and disease,  
Spread with the spreading of her wealthy

arts, 855  
England, the ancient and the free, ap-  
peared

In him to stand before my swimming  
eyes,

Unconquerably virtuous and secure.  
—No more of this, lest I offend his dust:

Short was his life, and a brief tale re-  
mains. 860

"One day—a summer's day of annual  
pomp

And solemn chase—from morn to sultry  
noon

His steps had followed, fleetest of the  
fleet,

The red-deer driven along its native  
heights

With cry of hound and horn; and, from  
that toil 865

Returned with sinews weakened and re-  
laxed,

This generous Youth, too negligent of self,  
Plunged—'mid a gay and busy throng

convened  
To wash the fleeces of his Father's flock—  
Into the chilling flood. Convulsions dire

Seized him, that self-same night; and  
through the space 871

Of twelve ensuing days his frame was  
wrenched,

Till nature rested from her work in death.  
To him, thus snatched away, his com-  
rades paid 874

A soldier's honours. At his funeral hour  
Bright was the sun, the sky a cloudless  
blue— 876

A golden lustre slept upon the hills;  
And if by chance a stranger, wandering  
there, 877

From some commanding eminence had  
looked

Down on this spot, well pleased would  
he have seen 880

A glittering spectacle; but every face  
Was pallid: seldom hath that eye been  
moist

With tears, that wept not then; nor were  
the few, 881

Who from their dwellings came not forth  
to join

In this sad service, less disturbed than  
we. 885

They started at the tributary peal  
Of instantaneous thunder, which an-  
nounced,

Through the still air, the closing of the  
Grave;

And distant mountains echoed with a  
sound

Of lamentation, never heard before!"

The Pastor ceased.—My venerable  
Friend 891

Victoriously upraised his clear bright eye;  
And, when that eulogy was ended, stood  
Enrapt, as if his inward sense perceived  
The prolongation of some still response,  
Sent by the ancient Soul of this wide  
land, 896

The Spirit of its mountains and its seas,  
Its cities, temples, fields, its awful power,  
Its rights and virtues—by that Deity  
Descending, and supporting his pure  
heart 900

With patriotic confidence and joy.  
And, at the last of those memorial words,  
The pining Solitary turned aside;  
Whether through manly instinct to con-  
ceal

Tender emotions spreading from the  
heart 905

To his worn cheek; or with uneasy shame  
For those cold humours of habitual spleen  
That, fondly seeking in dispraise of man

Solace and self-excuse, had sometimes  
urged

To self-abuse a not ineloquent tongue.

—Right toward the sacred Edifice his  
steps 911

Had been directed; and we saw him now  
Intent upon a monumental stone,

Whose uncouth form was grafted on the  
wall,

Or rather seemed to have grown into the  
side 915

Of the rude pile; as oftentimes trunks of  
trees,

Where nature works in wild and craggy  
spots,

Are seen incorporate with the living  
rock—

To endure for aye. The Vicar, taking note  
Of his employment, with a courteous  
smile 920

Exclaimed—

"The sagest Antiquarian's eye  
That task would foil;" then, letting fall  
his voice

While he advanced, thus spake: "Tradi-  
tion tells

That, in Eliza's golden days, a Knight  
Came on a war-horse sumptuously at-  
tired, 925

And fixed his home in this sequestered  
vale.

'Tis left untold if here he first drew  
breath,

Or as a stranger reached this deep recess,  
Unknown and unknown. A pleasing  
thought

I sometimes entertain, that haply bound  
To Scotland's court in service of his  
Queen, 931

Or sent on mission to some northern  
Chief

Of England's realm, this vale he might  
have seen

With transient observation; and thence  
caught

An image fair, which, brightening in his  
soul 935

When joy of war and pride of chivalry  
Languished beneath accumulated years,

Had power to draw him from the world,  
resolved

To make that paradise his chosen home  
To which his peaceful fancy oft had turned.

"Vague thoughts are these; but, if be-  
lief may rest 941

Upon unwritten story fondly traced  
From sire to son, in this obscure retreat  
The Knight arrived, with spear and shield,  
and borne

Upon a Charger gorgeously bedecked 945  
With brodered housings. And the lofty  
Steed—

His sole companion, and his faithful  
friend,

Whom he, in gratitude, let loose to range  
In fertile pastures—was beheld with eyes  
Of admiration and delightful awe, 950  
By those untravelled Dalesmen. With  
less pride,

Yet free from touch of envious discontent,  
They saw a mansion at his bidding rise,  
Like a bright star, amid the lowly band  
Of their rude homesteads. Here the  
Warrior dwelt; 955

And, in that mansion, children of his own,  
Or kindred, gathered round him. As a  
tree

That falls and disappears, the house is  
gone;

And, through improvidence or want of  
love

For ancient worth and honourable things,  
The spear and shield are vanished, which  
the Knight 961

Hung in his rustic hall. One ivied arch  
Myself have seen, a gateway, last remains  
Of that foundation in domestic care

Raised by his hands. And now no trace  
is left 965

Of the mild-hearted Champion, save this  
stone,

Faithless memorial! and his family name  
Borne by yon clustering cottages, that  
sprang

From out the ruins of his stately lodge:  
These, and the name and title at full  
length,— 970

Sir Alfred Erthing, with appropriate  
words

Accompanied, still extant, in a wreath  
Or posy, girding round the several fronts

Of three clear-sounding and harmonious  
bells,  
That in the steeple hang, his pious gift."

"So fails, so languishes, grows dim,  
and dies," 976  
The grey-haired Wanderer perversely ex-  
claimed,

"All that this world is proud of. From  
their spheres

The stars of human glory are cast down;  
Perish the roses and the flowers of kings<sup>1</sup>,  
Princes, and emperors, and the crowns  
and palms 981

Of all the mighty, withered and con-  
sumed!

Nor is power given to lowliest innocence  
Long to protect her own. The man him-  
self

Departs; and soon is spent the line of  
those 985

Who, in the bodily image, in the mind,  
In heart or soul, in station or pursuit,  
Did most resemble him. Degrees and  
ranks,

Fraternities and orders—heaping high  
New wealth upon the burthen of the old,  
And placing trust in privilege confirmed  
And re-confirmed—are scoffed at with a  
smile

Of greedy foretaste, from the secret stand  
Of Desolation, aimed: to slow decline  
These yield, and these to sudden over-  
throw: 995

Their virtue, service, happiness, and state  
Expire; and nature's pleasant robe of  
green,

Humanity's appointed shroud, enwraps  
Their monuments and their memory. The  
vast Frame "

Of social nature changes evermore 1000  
Her organs and her members, with decay  
Restless, and restless generation, powers  
And functions dying and produced at  
need,—

And by this law the mighty whole sub-  
sists:

With an ascent and progress in the  
main; 1005

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 938.

Yet, oh! how disproportioned to the  
hopes  
And expectations of self-flattering minds!

"The courteous Knight, whose bones  
are here interred, 1013

Lived in an age conspicuous as our own  
For strife and ferment in the minds of  
men; 1010

Whence alteration in the forms of things,  
Various and vast. A memorable age!  
Which did to him assign a pensive lot—  
To linger 'mid the last of those bright  
clouds

That, on the steady breeze of honour,  
sailed 1015

In long procession calm and beautiful.  
He who had seen his own bright order  
fade,

And its devotion gradually decline,  
(While war, relinquishing the lance and  
shield,

Her temper changed, and bowed to other  
laws) 1020

Had also witnessed, in his morn of life,  
That violent commotion, which o'erthrew,  
In town and city and sequestered glen,  
Altar, and cross, and church of solemn  
roof,

And old religious house—pile after pile;  
And shook their tenants out into the  
fields, 1026

Like wild beasts without home! Their  
hour was come;

But why no softening thought of grati-  
tude,

No just remembrance, scruple, or wise  
doubt?

Benevolence is mild; nor borrows help,

Save at worst need, from bold impetuous  
force, 1031

Fittest allied to anger and revenge.  
But Human-kind rejoices in the might  
Of mutability; and airy hopes,  
Dancing around her, hinder and disturb  
Those meditations of the soul that feed  
The retrospective virtues. Festive songs  
Break from the maddened nations at the  
sight

Of sudden overthrow; and cold neglect  
Is the sure consequence of slow decay.

"Even," said the Wanderer, "as that  
courteous Knight, 1041

Bound by his vow to labour for redress  
Of all who suffer wrong, and to enact  
By sword and lance the law of gentle-  
ness,

(If I may venture of myself to speak, 1045  
Trusting that not incongruously I blend  
Low things with lofty) I too shall be  
doomed

To outlive the kindly use and fair esteem  
Of the poor calling which my youth  
embraced

With no unworthy prospect. But enough;  
—Thoughts crowd upon me—and 'twere  
seemlier now 1051

To stop, and yield our gracious Teacher  
thanks

For the pathetic records which his voice  
Hath here delivered; words of heartfelt  
truth,

Tending to patience when affliction  
strikes; 1055

To hope and love; to confident repose  
In God; and reverence for the dust of  
Man."

## BOOK EIGHTH.

### THE PARSONAGE.

#### ARGUMENT.

Pastor's apology and apprehensions that he might have detained his Auditors too long, with the Pastor's invitation to his house.—Solitary disinclined to comply—rallies the Wanderer—and playfully draws a comparison between his itinerant profession and that of the Knight-errant—which leads to Wanderer's giving an account of changes in the Country from the manufacturing spirit.—Favourable effects.—The other side of the picture, and chiefly as it has affected the humbler classes.—Wanderer asserts the hollowness of all national grandeur if unsupported by moral worth.—Physical science unable to support itself.—Lamentations over an excess of manufacturing industry among the humbler Classes of Society.—Picture of a Child employed in a Cotton-mill.—Ignorance and degradation of Children among the agricultural Population reviewed.—Conversation broken off by a renewed Invitation from the Pastor.—Path leading to his House.—Its appearance described.—His Daughter.—His Wife.—His Son (a Boy) enters with his Companion.—Their happy appearance.—The Wanderer how affected by the sight of them.

THE pensive Sceptic of the lonely vale  
To those acknowledgments subscribed his  
own,

With a sedate compliance, which the  
Priest

Failed not to notice, inly pleased, and  
said:—

“If ye, by whom invited I began 5  
These narratives of calm and humble life,  
Be satisfied, 'tis well,—the end is gained;  
And in return for sympathy bestowed  
And patient listening, thanks accept from  
me.

—Life, death, eternity! momentous  
themes 10

Are they—and might demand a seraph's  
tongue,

Were they not equal to their own support;  
And therefore no incompetence of mine  
Could do them wrong. The universal  
forms

Of human nature, in a spot like this, 15  
Present themselves at once to all men's  
view:

Ye wished for act and circumstance, that  
make

The individual known and understood;

And such as my best judgment could  
select

From what the place afforded, have been  
given; 20

Though apprehensions crossed me that  
my zeal

To his might well be likened, who unlocks  
A cabinet stored with gems and pictures—  
draws

His treasures forth, soliciting regard  
To this, and this, as worthier than the  
last, 25

Till the spectator, who awhile was pleased  
More than the exhibitor himself, becomes  
Weary and faint, and longs to be released.

—But let us hence! my dwelling is in  
sight,

And there—”

At this the Solitary shrunk 30  
With backward will; but, wanting not  
address

That inward motion to disguise, he said  
To his Compatriot, smiling as he spake;  
—“The peaceable remains of this good  
Knight

Would be disturbed, I fear, with wrathful  
scorn, 35

If consciousness could reach him where  
 he lies  
 That one, albeit of these degenerate times,  
 Deploring changes past, or dreading  
 change  
 Foreseen, had dared to couple, even in  
 thought,  
 The fine vocation of the sword and lance  
 With the gross aims and body-bending  
 toil  
 Of a poor brotherhood who walk the  
 earth  
 Pitied, and, where they are not known,  
 despised.

"Yet, by the good Knight's leave, the  
 two estates  
 Are graced with some resemblance.  
 Errant those, 45  
 Exiles and wanderers—and the like are  
 these;  
 Who, with their burthen, traverse hill  
 and dale,  
 Carrying relief for nature's simple wants.  
 —What though no higher recompense be  
 sought  
 Than honest maintenancè, by irksome  
 toil 50  
 Full oft procured, yet may they claim  
 respect,  
 Among the intelligent, for what this  
 course  
 Enables them to be and to perform.  
 Their tardy steps give leisure to observe,  
 While solitude permits the mind to feel;  
 Instructs, and prompts her to supply  
 defects 56  
 By the division of her inward self  
 For grateful converse: and to these poor  
 men  
 Nature (I but repeat your favourite boast)  
 Is bountiful—go wheresoe'er they may; 60  
 Kind nature's various wealth is all their  
 own.  
 Versed in the characters of men; and  
 bound,  
 By ties of daily interest, to maintain  
 Conciliatory manners and smooth speech;  
 Such have been, and still are in their  
 degree, 65  
 Examples efficacious to refine

Rude intercourse; apt agents to expel,  
 By importation of unlooked-for arts,  
 Barbarian torpor, and blind prejudice;  
 Raising, through just gradation, savage  
 life 70  
 To rustic, and the rustic to urbane.  
 —Within their moving magazines is  
 lodged  
 Power that comes forth to quicken and  
 exalt  
 Affections seated in the mother's breast,  
 And in the lover's fancy; and to feed 75  
 The sober sympathies of long-tried friends.  
 —By these Itinerants, as experienced  
 men,  
 Counsel is given; contention they appease  
 With gentle language; in remotest wilds,  
 Tears wipe away, and pleasant tidings  
 bring; 80  
 Could the proud quest of chivalry do  
 more?"

"Happy," rejoined the Wanderer,  
 "they who gain  
 A panegyric from your generous tongue!  
 But, if to these Wayfarers once pertained  
 Aught of romantic interest, it is gone. 85  
 Their purer service, in this realm at least,  
 Is past for ever.—An inventive Age  
 Has wrought, if not with speed of magic,  
 yet  
 To most strange issues. I have lived to  
 mark  
 A new and unforeseen creation rise 90  
 From out the labours of a peaceful Land  
 Wielding her potent enginery to frame  
 And to produce, with appetite as keen  
 As that of war, which rests not night  
 or day,  
 Industrious to destroy! With fruitless  
 pains 95  
 Might one like me *now* visit many a tract  
 Which, in his youth, he trod, and trod  
 again,  
 A lone pedestrian with a scanty freight,  
 Wished-for, or welcome, wheresoe'er he  
 came—  
 Among the tenantry of thorpè and vill;  
 Or straggling burgh, of ancient charter  
 proud, 100  
 And dignified by battlements and towers

Of some stern castle, mouldering on the brow  
 Of a green hill or bank of rugged stream.  
 The foot-path faintly marked, the horse-track wild, 105  
 And formidable length of plashy lane,  
 (Prized avenues ere others had been shaped  
 Or easier links connecting place with place)  
 Have vanished—swallowed up by stately roads  
 Easy and bold, that penetrate the gloom  
 Of Britain's farthest glens. The Earth has lent 111  
 Her waters, Air her breezes<sup>1</sup>; and the sail  
 Of traffic glides with ceaseless intercourse,  
 Glistening along the low and woody dale;  
 Or, in its progress, on the lofty side 115  
 Of some bare hill, with wonder kenned from far.

“Meanwhile, at social Industry's command,  
 How quick, how vast an increase! From the germ  
 Of some poor hamlet, rapidly produced  
 Here a huge town, continuous and compact, 120  
 Hiding the face of earth for leagues—and there,  
 Where not a habitation stood before,  
 Abodes of men irregularly massed  
 Like trees in forests,—spread through spacious tracts,  
 O'er which the smoke of unremitting fires  
 Hangs permanent, and plentiful as wreaths 126  
 Of vapour glittering in the morning sun.  
 And, wheresoe'er the traveller turns his steps,  
 He sees the barren wilderness erased,  
 Or disappearing; triumph that proclaims  
 How much the mild Directress of the plough 131  
 Owes to alliance with these new-born arts!  
 —Hence is the wide sea peopled,—hence the shores

Of Britain are resorted to by ships  
 Freight from every climate of the world 135  
 With the world's choicest produce.  
 Hence that sum  
 Of keels that rest within her crowded ports,  
 Or ride at anchor in her sounds and bays;  
 That animating spectacle of sails  
 That, through her inland regions, to and fro 140  
 Pass with the respirations of the tide,  
 Perpetual, multitudinous! Finally,  
 Hence a dread arm of floating power, a voice  
 Of thunder daunting those who would approach  
 With hostile purposes the blessed Isle, 145  
 Truth's consecrated residence, the seat  
 Impregnable of Liberty and Peace.

“And yet, O happy Pastor of a flock  
 Faithfully watched, and, by that loving care  
 And Heaven's good providence, preserved from taint! 150  
 With you I grieve, when on the darker side  
 Of this great change I look; and there behold  
 Such outrage done to nature as compels  
 The indignant power to justify herself;  
 Yea, to avenge her violated rights, 155  
 For England's bane.—When soothing darkness spreads  
 O'er hill and vale,” the Wanderer thus expressed  
 His recollections, “and the punctual stars,  
 While all things else are gathering to their homes, 159  
 Advance, and in the firmament of heaven  
 Glitter—but undisturbing, undisturbed;  
 As if their silent company were charged  
 With peaceful admonitions for the heart  
 Of all-beholding Man, earth's thoughtful lord;  
 Then, in full many a region, once like this 165  
 The assured domain of calm simplicity  
 And pensive quiet, an unnatural light

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 933.

Prepared for never-resting Labour's eyes  
Breaks from a many-windowed fabric  
huge;

And at the appointed hour a bell is  
heard, 170

Of harsher import than the curfew-knoll  
That spake the Norman Conqueror's stern  
behest—

A local summons to unceasing toil !

Disgorge are now the ministers of day ;  
And, as they issue from the illumined  
pile, 175

A fresh band meets them, at the crowded  
door—

And in the courts—and where the rum-  
bling stream,

That turns the multitude of dizzy wheels,  
Glazes, like a troubled spirit, in its bed  
Among the rocks below. Men, maidens,  
youths, 180

Mother and little children, boys and girls,  
Enter, and each the wonted task re-  
sumes

Within this temple, where is offered up  
To Gain, the master-idol of the realm,  
Perpetual sacrifice. Even thus of old 185  
Our ancestors, within the still domain  
Of vast cathedral or conventual church,  
Their vigils kept; where tapers day and  
night

On the dim altar burned continually,  
In token that the House was evermore  
Watching to God. Religious men were  
they; 191

Nor would their reason, tutored to aspire  
Above this transitory world, allow  
That there should pass a moment of the  
year,

When in their land the Almighty's ser-  
vice ceased. 195

“Triumph who will in these profaner  
rites

Which we, a generation self-extolled,  
As zealously perform ! I cannot share  
His proud complacency :—yet do I exult,  
Casting reserve away, exult to see 200  
An intellectual mastery exercised  
O'er the blind elements ; a purpose given,  
A perseverance fed ; almost a soul  
Imparted—to brute matter. I rejoice,

Measuring the force of those gigantic  
powers 205

That, by the thinking mind, have been  
compelled

To serve the will of feeble-bodied Man.

For with the sense of admiration bleeds

The animating hope that time may come  
When, strengthened, yet not dazzled, by  
the might 210

Of this dominion over nature gained,

Men of all lands shall exercise the same

In due proportion to their country's need ;  
Learning, though late, that all true glory  
rests, 214

All praise, all safety, and all happiness,  
Upon the moral law. Egyptian Thebes,  
Tyre, by the margin of the sounding  
waves,

Palmyra, central in the desert, fell ;

And the Arts died by which they had  
been raised. 219

—Call Archimedes from his buried tomb  
Upon the grave of vanished Syracuse,  
And feelingly the Sage shall make report  
How insecure, how baseless in itself,

Is the Philosophy whose sway depends  
On mere material instruments ;—how  
weak 225

Those arts, and high inventions, if un-  
propped

By virtue.—He, sighing with pensive  
grief,

Amid his calm abstractions, would admit  
That not the slender privilege is theirs  
To save themselves from blank forgetful-  
ness !” 230

When from the Wanderer's lips these  
words had fallen,

I said, “And, did in truth those vaunted  
Arts

Possess such privilege, how could we  
escape

Sadness and keen regret, we who revere,  
And would preserve as things above all  
price, 235

The old domestic morals of the land,

Her simple manners, and the stable worth

That dignified and cheered a low estate ?

Oh ! where is now the character of peace,

Sobriety, and order, and chaste love, 240

And honest dealing, and untainted speech,  
And pure good-will, and hospitable cheer;  
That made the very thought of country-  
life

A thought of refuge, for a mind detained  
Reluctantly amid the bustling crowd?

Where now the beauty of the sabbath  
kept 246

With conscientious reverence, as a day  
By the almighty Lawgiver pronounced  
Holy and blest? and where the winning  
grace

Of all the lighter ornaments attached  
To time and season, as the year rolled  
round?" 251

"Fled!" was the Wanderer's passion-  
ate response,

"Fled utterly! or only to be traced  
In a few fortunate retreats like this;

Which I behold with trembling, when I  
think 255

What lamentable change, a year—a  
month—

May bring; that brook converting as it  
runs

Into an instrument of deadly bane  
For those, who, yet untempted to forsake  
The simple occupations of their sires, 260  
Drink the pure water of its innocent  
stream

With lip almost as pure.—Domestic bliss  
(Or call it comfort, by a humbler name,)   
How art thou blighted for the poor Man's  
heart!

Lo! in such neighbourhood, from morn  
to eve, 265

The habitations empty! or perchance  
The Mother left alone,—no helping hand  
To rock the cradle of her peevish babe;

No daughters round her, busy at the  
wheel, 269

Or in dispatch of each day's little growth  
Of household occupation; no nice arts  
Of needle-work; no bustle at the fire,  
Where once the dinner was prepared with  
pride;

Nothing to speed the day, or cheer the  
mind;

Nothing to praise, to teach, or to com-  
mand! 275

"The Father, if perchance he still re-  
tain

His old employments, goes to field or wood,  
No longer led or followed by the Sons;  
Idlers perchance they were,—but in *his*  
sight; 6

Breathing fresh air, and treading the  
green earth; 280

Till their short holiday of childhood  
ceased,

Ne'er to return! That birthright now is  
lost.

Economists will tell you that the State  
Thrives by the forfeiture—unfeeling  
thought,

And false as monstrous! Can the mother  
thrive 285

By the destruction of her innocent sons  
In whom a premature necessity

Blocks out the forms of nature, precon-  
sumes

The reason, famishes the heart, shuts up  
The infant Being in itself, and makes  
Its very spring a season of decay! 291

The lot is wretched, the condition sad,  
Whether a pining discontent survive,

And thirst for change; or habit hath sub-  
dued 294

The soul deprest, dejected—even to love  
Of her close tasks, and long captivity.

"Oh, banish far such wisdom as con-  
demns

A native Briton to these inward chains,  
Fixed in his soul, so early and so deep;  
Without his own consent, or knowledge,  
fixed! 300

He is a slave to whom release comes not,  
And cannot come. The boy, where'er he  
turns,

Is still a prisoner; when the wind is up  
Among the clouds, and roars through the  
ancient woods;

Or when the sun is shining in the east,  
Quiet and calm. Behold him—in the  
school 306

Of his attainments? no; but with the air  
Fanning his temples under heaven's blue  
arch.

His raiment, whitened o'er with cotton-  
flakes

Or locks of wool, announces whence he comes. 310  
 Creeping in his gait and cowering, his lip pale,  
 His respiration quick and audible;  
 And scarcely could you fancy that a gleam  
 Could break from out those languid eyes, or a blush  
 Mantle upon his cheek. Is this the form.  
 Is that the countenance, and such the port, 316  
 Of no mean Being? One who should be clothed  
 With dignity befitting his proud hope;  
 Who, in his very childhood, should appear  
 Sublime from present purity and joy! 320  
 The limbs increase; but liberty of mind  
 Is gone for ever; and this organic frame,  
 So joyful in its motions, is become  
 Dull, to the joy of her own motions dead;  
 And even the touch, so exquisitely poured  
 Through the whole body, with a languid will 326  
 Performs its functions; rarely competent  
 To impress a vivid feeling on the mind  
 Of what there is delightful in the breeze,  
 The gentle visitations of the sun, 330  
 Or lapse of liquid element—by hand,  
 Or foot, or lip, in summer's warmth—perceived.  
 —Can hope look forward to a manhood raised  
 On such foundations?"  
 "Hope is none for him!"  
 The pale Recluse indignantly exclaimed,  
 "And tens of thousands suffer wrong as deep. 336  
 Yet be it asked, in justice to our age,  
 If there were not, before those arts appeared,  
 These structures rose, commingling old  
 And young,  
 And unripe sex with sex, for mutual taint; 340  
 If there were not, *then*, in our far-famed Isle,  
 Multitudes, who from infancy had breathed  
 Air unimprisoned, and had lived at large;

Yet walked beneath the sun, in human shape,  
 As abject, as degraded? At this day, 345  
 Who shall enumerate the crazy huts  
 And tottering hovels, whence do issue forth  
 A ragged Offspring, with their upright hair  
 Crowned like the image of fantastic Fear;  
 Or wearing, (shall we say?) in that white growth 350  
 An ill-adjusted turban, for defence  
 Or fierceness, wreathed around their sun-burnt brows,  
 By savage Nature? Shrivelled are their lips;  
 Naked, and coloured like the soil, the feet  
 On which they stand; as if thereby they drew 355  
 Some nourishment, as trees do by their roots,  
 From earth, the common mother of us all.  
 Figure and mien, complexion and attire,  
 Are leagued to strike dismay; but outstretched hand  
 And whining voice denote them suppliants 360  
 For the least boon that pity can bestow.  
 Such on the breast of darksome heaths are found;  
 And with their parents occupy the skirts  
 Of furze-clad commons; such are born and reared  
 At the mine's mouth under impending rocks; 365  
 Or dwell in chambers of some natural cave;  
 Or where their ancestors erected huts,  
 For the convenience of unlawful gain,  
 In forest purlieus; and the like are bred,  
 All England through, where nooks and slips of ground 370  
 Purloined, in times less jealous than our own,  
 From the green margin of the public way,  
 A residence afford them, 'mid the bloom  
 And gaiety of cultivated fields. 374  
 Such (we will hope the lowest in the scale)  
 Do I remember oft-times to have seen  
 'Mid Buxton's dreary heights. In earnest watch,

Till the swift vehicle approach, they stand;  
 Then, following closely with the cloud of dust, 379  
 An uncouth feat exhibit, and are gone  
 Heels over head, like tumblers on a stage.  
 —Up from the ground they snatch the copper coin,  
 And, on the freight of merry passengers  
 Fixing a steady eye, maintain their speed;  
 And spin—and pant—and overhead again,  
 Wild pursuivants! until their breath is lost, 386  
 Or bounty tires—and every face, that smiled  
 Encouragement, hath ceased to look that way.  
 —But, like the vagrants of the gipsy tribe,  
 These, bred to little pleasure in themselves, 390  
 Are profitless to others.

Turn we then  
 To Britons born and bred within the pale  
 Of civil polity, and early trained  
 To earn, by wholesome labour in the field,  
 The bread they eat. A sample should I give 395  
 Of what this stock hath long produced to enrich  
 The tender age of life, ye would exclaim,  
 'Is this the whistling plough-boy whose shrill notes  
 Impart new gladness to the morning air!'   
 Forgive me if I venture to suspect 400  
 That many, sweet to hear of in soft verse,  
 Are of no finer frame. Stiff are his joints;  
 Beneath a cumbrous frock, that to the knees  
 Invests the thriving churl, his legs appear,  
 Fellows to those that lustily upheld 405  
 The wooden stools for everlasting use,  
 Whereon our fathers sate. And mark his brow!  
 Under whose shaggy canopy are set  
 Two eyes—not dim, but of a healthy stare—  
 Wide, sluggish, blank, and ignorant, and strange— 410

Proclaiming boldly that they never drew  
 A look or motion of intelligence  
 From infant-conning of the Christ-cross-row,  
 Or puzzling through a primer, line by line,  
 Till perfect mastery crown the pains at last. 415  
 —What kindly warmth from touch of fostering hand,  
 What penetrating power of sun or breeze,  
 Shall e'er dissolve the crust wherein his soul  
 Sleeps, like a caterpillar sheathed in ice?  
 This torpor is no pitiable work 420  
 Of modern ingenuity; no town  
 Nor crowded city can be taxed with aught  
 Of sottish vice or desperate breach of law,  
 To which (and who can tell where or how soon?)  
 He may be roused. This Boy the fields  
 . produce: 425  
 His spade and hoe, mattock and glittering scythe,  
 The carter's whip that on his shoulder rests  
 In air high-towering with a boorish pomp,  
 The sceptre of his sway; his country's name,  
 Her equal rights, her churches and her schools— 430  
 What have they done for him? And, let me ask,  
 For tens of thousands uninformed as he?  
 In brief, what liberty of *mind* is here?"

This ardent sally pleased the mild good Man,  
 To whom the appeal couched in its closing words 435  
 Was pointedly addressed; and to the thoughts  
 That, in assent or opposition, rose  
 Within his mind, he seemed prepared to give  
 Prompt utterance; but the Vicar interposed  
 With invitation urgently renewed. 440  
 —We followed, taking as he led, a path  
 Along a hedge of hollies dark and tall,

Whose flexile boughs low bending with a  
weight  
Of leafy spray, concealed the stems and  
roots  
That gave them nourishment. When  
frosty winds 445  
Howl from the north, what kindly warmth,  
methought,  
Is here—how grateful this impervious  
screen!  
—Not shaped by simple wearing of the  
foot  
On rural business passing to and fro  
Was the commodious walk: a careful  
hand 450  
Had marked the line, and strewn its sur-  
face o'er  
With pure cerulean gravel, from the  
heights  
Fetched by a neighbouring brook.—Across  
the vale  
The stately fence accompanied our steps;  
And thus the pathway, by perennial  
green 455  
Guarded and graced, seemed fashioned  
to unite,  
As by a beautiful yet solemn chain,  
The Pastor's mansion with the house of  
prayer.

Like image of solemnity, conjoined  
With feminine allurements soft and fair,  
The mansion's self displayed;—a reverend  
pile 461  
With bold projections and recesses deep;  
Shadowy, yet gay and lightsome as it  
stood  
Fronting the noontide sun. We paused  
to admire  
The pillared porch, elaborately embossed;  
The low wide windows with their mul-  
lions old; 466  
The cornice, richly fretted, of grey stone;  
And that smooth slope from which the  
dwelling rose,  
By beds and banks Arcadian of gay  
flowers  
And flowering shrubs, protected and  
adorned: 470  
Profusion bright! and every flower as-  
suming

A more than natural vividness of hue  
From unaffected contrast with the gloom  
Of sober cypress, and the darker foil  
Of yew, in which survived some traces,  
here 475  
Not unbecoming, of grotesque device  
And uncouth fancy. From behind the  
roof  
Rose the slim ash and massy sycamore,  
Blending their diverse foliage with the  
green  
Of ivy, flourishing and thick, that clasped  
The huge round chimneys, harbour of  
delight 481  
For wren and redbreast,—where they sit  
and sing  
Their slender ditties when the trees are  
bare.  
Nor must I leave untouched (the picture  
else  
Were incomplete) a relique of old times  
Happily spared, a little Gothic niche  
Of nicest workmanship; that once had  
held  
The sculptured image of some patron-  
saint,  
Or of the blessed Virgin, looking down  
On all who entered those religious doors.

But lo! where from the rocky garden-  
mount 491  
Crowned by its antique summer-house—  
descends,  
Light as the silver fawn, a radiant Girl;  
For she hath recognised her honoured  
friend,  
The Wanderer ever welcome! A prompt  
kiss 495  
The glad some child bestows at his re-  
quest;  
And, up the flowery lawn as we advance,  
Hangs on the old Man with a happy  
look,  
And with a pretty restless hand of love.  
—We enter—by the Lady of the place  
Cordially greeted. Graceful was her port:  
A lofty stature undepressed by time,  
Whose visitation had not wholly spared  
The finer lineaments of form and face;  
To that complexion brought which pru-  
dence trusts in 505

And wisdom loves.—But when a stately  
 ship  
 Sails in smooth weather by the placid  
 coast  
 On homeward voyage,—what if wind and  
 wave,  
 And hardship undergone in various  
 climes,  
 Have caused her to abate the virgin  
 pride, <sup>510</sup>  
 And that full trim of inexperienced hope  
 With which she left her haven—not for  
 this,  
 Should the sun strike her, and the im-  
 partial breeze  
 Play on her streamers, fails she to as-  
 sume  
 Brightness and touching beauty of her  
 own, <sup>515</sup>  
 That charm all eyes. So bright, so fair,  
 appeared  
 This goodly Matron, shining in the  
 beams  
 Of unexpected pleasure.—Soon the board  
 Was spread, and we partook a plain re-  
 past. <sup>519</sup>

Here, resting in cool shelter, we beguiled  
 The mid-day hours with desultory talk;  
 From trivial themes to general argument  
 Passing, as accident or fancy led,  
 Or courtesy prescribed. While question  
 rose <sup>524</sup>

And answer flowed, the fetters of reserve  
 Dropping from every mind, the Solitary  
 Resumed the manners of his happier  
 days;

And in the various conversation bore  
 A willing, nay, at times, a forward part;  
 Yet with the grace of one who in the  
 world <sup>530</sup>  
 Had learned the art of pleasing, and had  
 now

Occasion given him to display his skill,  
 Upon the steadfast 'vantage-ground of  
 truth.

He gazed, with admiration unsuppressed,  
 Upon the landscape of the sun-bright  
 vale, <sup>535</sup>  
 Seen, from the shady room in which we  
 sate,

In softened perspective; and more than  
 once

Praised the consummate harmony serene  
 Of gravity and elegance, diffused  
 Around the mansion and its whole do-  
 main; <sup>540</sup>  
 Not, doubtless, without help of female  
 taste

And female care.—“A blessed lot is  
 yours!”

The words escaped his lip, with a tender  
 sigh

Breathed over them: but suddenly the door  
 Flew open, and a pair of lusty Boys <sup>545</sup>  
 Appeared, confusion checking their de-  
 light.

—Not brothers they in feature or attire,  
 But fond companions, so I guessed, in  
 field,

And by the river's margin—whence they  
 come, <sup>549</sup>

Keen anglers with unusual spoil elated.  
 One bears a willow-pannier on his back,  
 The boy of plainer garb, whose blush  
 survives

More deeply tinged. Twin might the  
 other be

To that fair girl who from the garden-  
 mount

Bounded:—triumphant entry this for  
 him! <sup>555</sup>

Between his hands he holds a smooth  
 blue stone,

On whose capacious surface see outspread  
 Large store of gleaming crimson-spotted  
 trouts;

Ranged side by side, and lessening by  
 degrees.

Up to the dwarf that tops the pinnacle.

Upon the board he lays the sky-blue  
 stone <sup>561</sup>

With its rich freight; their number he  
 proclaims;

Tells from what pool the noblest had  
 been dragged;

And where the very monarch of the  
 brook,

After long struggle, had escaped at last—  
 Stealing alternately at them and us <sup>566</sup>

(As doth his comrade too) a look of pride:  
 And, verily, the silent creatures made

A splendid sight, together thus exposed;  
 Dead—but not sullied or deformed by  
 death, 570  
 That seemed to pity what he could not  
 spare.

But O, the animation in the mien  
 Of those two boys! yea in the very words  
 With which the young narrator was in-  
 spired,  
 When, as our questions led, he told at  
 large 575  
 Of that day's prowess! Him might I  
 compare,  
 His looks, tones, gestures, eager elo-  
 quence,  
 To a bold brook that splits for better  
 speed,  
 And at the self-same moment, works its  
 way  
 Through many channels, ever and anon  
 Parted and re-united: his compeer 581  
 To the still lake, whose stillness is to  
 sight  
 As beautiful—as grateful to the mind.  
 —But to what object shall the lovely  
 Girl  
 Be likened? She whose countenance and  
 air 585

Unite the graceful qualities of both,  
 Even as she shares the pride and joy of  
 both.

My grey-haired Friend was moved; his  
 vivid eye  
 Glistened with tenderness; his mind, I  
 knew,  
 Was full; and had, I doubted not, re-  
 turned, 590  
 Upon this impulse, to the theme—ere-  
 while  
 Abruptly broken off. The ruddy boys  
 Withdrew, on summons to their well-  
 earned meal;  
 And He—to whom all tongues resigned  
 their rights  
 With willingness, to whom the general  
 ear 595  
 Listened with readier patience than to  
 strain  
 Of music, lute or harp, a long delight  
 That ceased not when his voice had  
 ceased—as One  
 Who from truth's central point serenely  
 views  
 The compass of his argument—began 600  
 Mildly, and with a clear and steady  
 tone.

## BOOK NINTH.

### DISCOURSE OF THE WANDERER, AND AN EVENING VISIT TO THE LAKE.

#### ARGUMENT.

Wanderer asserts that an active principle pervades the Universe, its noblest seat the human soul.—How lively this principle is in Childhood.—Hence the delight in old Age of looking back upon Childhood.—The dignity, powers, and privileges of Age asserted.—These not to be looked for generally but under a just government.—Right of a human Creature to be exempt from being considered as a mere Instrument.—The condition of multitudes deplored.—Former conversation recurred to, and the Wanderer's opinions set in a clearer light.—Truth placed within reach of the humblest.—Equality.—Happy state of the two Boys again adverted to.—Earnest wish expressed for a System of National Education established universally by Government.—Glorious effects of this foretold.—Walk to the Lake.—Grand spectacle from the side of a hill.—Address of Priest to the Supreme Being—in the course of which he contrasts with ancient Barbarism the present appearance of the scene before him.—The change ascribed to Christianity.—Apostrophe to his flock, living and dead.—Gratitude to the Almighty.—Return over the Lake.—Parting with the Solitary.—Under what circumstances.

“To every Form of being is assigned,”  
Thus calmly spake the venerable Sage,  
“An *active* Principle:—howe’er removed  
From sense and observation, it subsists  
In all things, in all natures; in the stars 5  
Of azure heaven, the unenduring clouds,  
In flower and tree, in every pebbly stone  
That paves the brooks, the stationary  
rocks,  
The moving waters, and the invisible air.  
Whate’er exists hath properties that  
spread 10  
Beyond itself, communicating good,  
A simple blessing, or with evil mixed;  
Spirit that knows no insulated spot,  
No chasm, no solitude; from link to link  
It circulates, the Soul of all the worlds. 15  
This is the freedom of the universe;  
Unfolded still the more, more visible,  
The more we know; and yet is revered  
least,  
And least respected in the human Mind,  
Its most apparent home. The food of  
hope 20  
Is meditated action; robbed of this  
Her sole support, she languishes and dies.  
We perish also; for we live by hope

And by desire; we see by the glad light  
And breathe the sweet air of futurity; 25  
And so we live, or else we have no life.  
To-morrow—nay perchance this very  
hour  
(For every moment hath its own to-  
morrow!)

Those blooming Boys, whose hearts are  
almost sick  
With present triumph, will be sure to  
find 30  
A field before them freshened with the  
dew  
Of other expectations;—in which course  
Their happy year spins round. The youth  
obeys 35  
A like glad impulse; and so moves the  
man  
’Mid all his apprehensions, cares, and  
fears,—  
Or so he ought to move. Ah! why in age  
Do we revert so fondly to the walks  
Of childhood—but that there the Soul  
discerns  
The dear memorial footsteps unimpaired  
Of her own native vigour; thence can  
hear 40

Reverberations; and a choral song,  
Commingle with the incense that ascends,

Undaunted, toward the imperishable heavens,

From her own lonely altar?

Do not think  
That good and wise ever will be allowed,  
Though strength decay, to breathe in such  
estate 46

As shall divide them wholly from the stir  
Of hopeful nature. Rightly it is said  
That Man descends into the VALE of  
years;

Yet have I thought that we might also  
speak, 50

And not presumptuously, I trust, of Age,  
As of a final EMINENCE; though bare  
In aspect and forbidding, yet a point  
On which 'tis not impossible to sit  
In awful sovereignty; a place of power, 55  
A throne, that may be likened unto his,  
Who, in some placid day of summer, looks  
Down from a mountain-top,—say one of  
those

High peaks, that bound the vale where  
now we are. 59

Faint, and diminished to the gazing eye,  
Forest and field, and hill and dale appear,  
With all the shapes over their surface  
spread:

But, while the gross and visible frame of  
things

Relinquishes its hold upon the sense,  
Yea almost on the Mind herself, and  
seems 65

All unsubstantialized,—how loud the voice  
Of waters, with invigorated peal  
From the full river in the vale below,  
Ascending! For on that superior height  
Who sits, is discomfited from the press  
Of near obstructions, and is privileged 71  
To breathe in solitude, above the host  
Of ever-humming insects, 'mid thin air  
That suits not them. The murmur of the  
leaves

Many and idle, visits not his ear: 75  
This he is freed from, and from thousand  
notes

(Not less unceasing, not less vain than  
these,)

By which the finer passages of sense  
Are occupied; and the Soul, that would  
incline

To listen, is prevented or deterred. 80

“And may it not be hoped, that, placed  
by age

In like removal, tranquil though severe,  
We are not so removed for utter loss;  
But for some favour, suited to our need?  
What more than that the severing should  
confer 85

Fresh power to commune with the in-  
visible world,

And hear the mighty stream of tendency  
Uttering, for elevation of our thought,  
A clear sonorous voice, inaudible  
To the vast multitude; whose doom it is  
To run the giddy round of vain delight, 91  
Or fret and labour on the Plain below.

“But, if to such sublime ascent the  
hopes

Of Man may rise, as to a welcome close  
And termination of his mortal course; 95  
Them only can such hope inspire whose  
minds

Have not been starved by absolute ne-  
glect;

Nor bodies crushed by unremitting toil;  
To whom kind Nature, therefore, may  
afford

Proof of the sacred love she bears for all;  
Whose birthright Reason, therefore, may  
ensure. 101

For me, consulting what I feel within  
In times when most existence with herself  
Is satisfied, I cannot but believe,

That, far as kindly Nature hath free  
scope 105

And Reason's sway predominates; even  
so far,

Country, society, and time itself,  
That saps the individual's bodily frame,  
And lays the generations low in dust,  
Do, by the almighty Ruler's grace, par-  
take 110

Of one maternal spirit, bringing forth  
And cherishing with ever-constant love,  
That tires not, nor betrays. Our life is  
turned

Out of her course, wherever man is made  
 An offering, or a sacrifice, a tool 115  
 Or implement, a passive thing employed  
 As a brute mean, without acknowledg-  
 ment

Of common right or interest in the end;  
 Used or abused, as selfishness may prompt.  
 Say, what can follow for a rational soul  
 Perverted thus, but weakness in all good,  
 And strength in evil? Hence an after-call  
 For chastisement, and custody, and bonds,  
 And ofttimes Death, avenger of the past,  
 And the sole guardian in whose hands we  
 dare 125

Entrust the future.—Not for these sad  
 issues

Was Man created; but to obey the law  
 Of life, and hope, and action. And 'tis  
 known

That when we stand upon our native soil,  
 Unelbowed by such objects as oppress 130  
 Our active powers, those powers them-  
 selves become

Strong to subvert our noxious qualities:  
 They sweep distemper from the busy day,  
 And make the chalice of the big round  
 year

Run o'er with gladness; whence the Be-  
 ing moves 135

In beauty through the world; and all  
 who see

Bless him, rejoicing in his neighbour-  
 hood."

"Then," said the Solitary, "by what force  
 Of language shall a feeling heart express  
 Her sorrow for that multitude in whom  
 We look for health from seeds that have  
 been sown 141

In sickness, and for increase in a power  
 That works but by extinction? On them-  
 selves

They cannot lean, nor turn to their own  
 hearts

To know what they must do; their wis-  
 dom is 145

To look into the eyes of others, thence  
 To be instructed what they must avoid:  
 Or rather, let us say, how least observed,  
 How with most quiet and most silent  
 death,

With the least taint and injury to the  
 air 150  
 The oppressor breathes, their human form  
 divine,  
 And their immortal soul, may waste  
 away."

The Sage rejoined, "I thank you—you  
 have spared

My voice the utterance of a keen regret,  
 A wide compassion which with you I  
 share. 155

When, heretofore, I placed before your  
 sight

A Little-one, subjected to the arts  
 Of modern ingenuity, and made  
 The senseless member of a vast machine,  
 Serving as doth a spindle or a wheel; 160  
 Think not, that, pitying him, I could  
 forget

The rustic Boy, who walks the fields,  
 untaught;

The slave of ignorance, and oft of want,  
 And miserable hunger. Much, too much,  
 Of this unhappy lot, in early youth 165  
 We both have witnessed, lot which I  
 myself

Shared, though in mild and merciful  
 degree:

Yet was the mind to hinderances exposed,  
 Through which I struggled, not without  
 distress

And sometimes injury, like a lamb en-  
 thrall'd 170

'Mid thorns and brambles; or a bird that  
 breaks

Through a strong net, and mounts upon  
 the wind,

Though with her plumes impaired. If  
 they, whose souls

Should open while they range the richer  
 fields 174

Of merry England, are obstructed less  
 By indigence, their ignorance is not less,  
 Nor less to be deplored. For who can  
 doubt

That tens of thousands at this day exist  
 Such as the boy you painted, lineal  
 heirs

Of those who once were vassals of her  
 soil, 180

Following its fortunes like the beasts or trees  
Which it sustained. But no one takes delight  
In this oppression; none are proud of it;  
It bears no sounding name, nor ever bore;  
A standing grievance, an indigenous vice  
Of every country under heaven. My thoughts 186  
Were turned to evils that are new and chosen,  
A bondage lurking under shape of good,—  
Arts, in themselves beneficent and kind,  
But all too fondly followed and too far;—  
To victims, which the merciful can see  
Nor think that they are victims—turned to wrongs,  
By women, who have children of their own,  
Beheld without compassion, yea, with praise!  
I spake of mischief by the wise diffused  
With gladness, thinking that the more it spreads 196  
The healthier, the securer, we become;  
Delusion which a moment may destroy!  
Lastly I mourned for those whom I had seen  
Corrupted and cast down, on favoured ground, 200  
Where circumstance and nature had combined  
To shelter innocence, and cherish love;  
Who, but for this intrusion, would have lived,  
Possessed of health, and strength, and peace of mind;  
Thus would have lived, or never have been born. 205

“Alas! what differs more than man from man!  
And whence that difference? Whence but from himself?  
For see the universal Race endowed  
With the same upright form! The sun is fixed, 209  
And the infinite magnificence of heaven  
Fixed, within reach of every human eye;  
The sleepless ocean murmurs for all ears;  
The vernal field infuses fresh delight

Into all hearts. Throughout the world of sense,  
Even as an object is sublime or fair, 215  
That object is laid open to the view  
Without reserve or veil; and as a power  
Is salutary, or an influence sweet,  
Are each and all enabled to perceive  
That power, that influence, by impartial law. 220  
Gifts nobler are vouchsafed alike to all;  
Reason, and, with that reason, smiles and tears;  
Imagination, freedom in the will;  
Conscience to guide and check; and death to be  
Foretasted, immortality conceived 225  
By all,—a blissful immortality,  
To them whose holiness on earth shall make  
The Spirit capable of heaven, assured.  
Strange, then, nor less than monstrous, might be deemed  
The failure, if the Almighty, to this point 230  
Liberal and undistinguishing, should hide  
The excellence of moral qualities  
From common understanding; leaving truth  
And virtue, difficult, abstruse, and dark;  
Hard to be won, and only by a few; 235  
Strange, should He deal herein with nice respects,  
And frustrate all the rest! Believe it not:  
The primal duties shine aloft—like stars;  
The charities that soothe, and heal, and bless,  
Are scattered at the feet of Man—like flowers. 240  
The generous inclination, the just rule,  
Kind wishes, and good actions, and pure thoughts—  
No mystery is here! Here is no boon  
For high—yet not for low; for proudly graced—  
Yet not for meek of heart. The smoke ascends 245  
To heaven—as lightly from the cottage-hearth  
As from the haughtiest palace. He, whose soul  
Ponders this true equality, may walk

The fields of earth with gratitude and hope ;  
 Yet, in that meditation, will he find 250  
 Motive to sadder grief, as we have found ;  
 Lamenting ancient virtues overthrown,  
 And for the injustice grieving, that hath made  
 So wide a difference between man and man.

“Then let us rather fix our gladdened thoughts 255  
 Upon the brighter scene. How blest that pair  
 Of blooming Boys (whom we beheld even now)  
 Blest in their several and their common lot !  
 A few short hours of each returning day  
 The thriving prisoners of their village-school : 260  
 And thence let loose, to seek their pleasant homes  
 Or range the grassy lawn in vacancy ;  
 To breathe and to be happy, run and shout  
 Idle,—but no delay, no harm, no loss ;  
 For every genial power of heaven and earth, 265  
 Through all the seasons of the changeful year,  
 Obsequiously doth take upon herself  
 To labour for them ; bringing each in turn  
 The tribute of enjoyment, knowledge, health,  
 Beauty, or strength ! Such privilege is theirs, 270  
 Granted alike in the outset of their course  
 To both ; and, if that partnership must cease,  
 I grieve not,” to the Pastor here he turned,  
 “Much as I glory in that child of yours,  
 Repine not for his cottage-comrade, whom 275  
 Belike no higher destiny awaits  
 Than the old hereditary wish fulfilled ;  
 The wish for liberty to live—content  
 With what Heaven grants, and die—in peace of mind,

Within the bosom of his native vale. 280  
 At least, whatever fate the noon of life  
 Reserves for either, sure it is that both  
 Have been permitted to enjoy the dawn ;  
 Whether regarded as a jocund time,  
 That in itself may terminate, or lead 285  
 In course of nature to a sober eve.  
 Both have been fairly dealt with ; looking back  
 They will allow that justice has in them  
 Been shown, alike to body and to mind.”

He paused, as if revolving in his soul  
 Some weighty matter ; then, with fervent voice 291  
 And an impassioned majesty, exclaimed—

“O for the coming of that glorious time  
 When, prizing knowledge as her noblest wealth 294  
 And best protection, this imperial Realm,  
 While she exacts allegiance, shall admit  
 An obligation, on her part, to *teach*  
 Them who are born to serve her and obey ;  
 Binding herself by statute to secure<sup>1</sup>  
 For all the children whom her soil maintains 300  
 The rudiments of letters, and inform  
 The mind with moral and religious truth,  
 Both understood and practised,—so that none,  
 However destitute, be left to droop  
 By timely culture unsustained ; or run 305  
 Into a wild disorder ; or be forced  
 To drudge through a weary life without the help  
 Of intellectual implements and tools ;  
 A savage horde among the civilised,  
 A servile band among the lordly free ! 310  
 This sacred right, the lisping babe proclaims  
 To be inherent in him, by Heaven's will,  
 For the protection of his innocence ;  
 And the rude boy—who, having overpast  
 The sinless age, by conscience is en-rolled, 315  
 Yet mutinously knits his angry brow,

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 938.

And lifts his wilful hand on mischief bent,  
Or turns the godlike faculty of speech  
To impious use—by process indirect  
Declares his due, while he makes known  
his need. 320

—This sacred right is fruitlessly an-  
nounced,

This universal plea in vain addressed,  
To eyes and ears of parents who them-  
selves

Did, in the time of their necessity,  
Urge it in vain; and, therefore, like a  
prayer 325

That from the humblest floor ascends to  
heaven,

It mounts to reach the State's parental  
ear;

Who, if indeed she own a mother's heart,  
And be not most unfeelingly devoid  
Of gratitude to Providence, will grant 330  
The unquestionable good—which, Eng-  
land, safe

From interference of external force,  
May grant at leisure; without risk in-  
curred

That what in wisdom for herself she doth,  
Others shall e'er be able to undo. 335

"Look! and behold, from Calpe's sun-  
burnt cliffs

To the flat margin of the Baltic sea,  
Long-reverenced titles cast away as weeds;  
Laws overturned; and territory split,  
Like fields of ice rent by the polar  
wind, 340

And forced to join in less obnoxious  
shapes

Which, ere they gain consistence, by a  
gust

Of the same breath are shattered and  
destroyed.

Meantime the sovereignty of these fair  
Isles

Remains entire and indivisible: 345

And, if that ignorance were removed,  
which breeds

Within the compass of their several shores  
Dark discontent, or loud commotion, each  
Might still preserve the beautiful repose  
Of heavenly bodies shining in their  
spheres. 350

—The discipline of slavery is unknown  
Among us,—hence the more do we re-  
quire

The discipline of virtue; order else  
Cannot subsist, nor confidence, nor peace.  
Thus, duties rising out of good possest, 355  
And prudent caution needful to avert  
Impending evil, equally require  
That the whole people should be taught  
and trained.

So shall licentiousness and black resolve  
Be rooted out, and virtuous habits take 360  
Their place; and genuine piety descend,  
Like an inheritance, from age to age.

"With such foundations laid, avaunt  
the fear

Of numbers crowded on their native soil,  
To the prevention of all healthful  
growth 365  
Through mutual injury! Rather in the  
law

Of increase and the mandate from above  
Rejoice!—and ye have special cause for  
joy.

—For, as the element of air affords  
An easy passage to the industrious  
bees 370

Fraught with their burthens; and a way  
as smooth

For those ordained to take their sounding  
flight

From the thronged hive, and settle where  
they list

In fresh abodes—their labour to renew;  
So the wide waters, open to the power, 375  
The will, the instincts, and appointed  
needs

Of Britain, do invite her to cast off  
Her swarms, and in succession send them  
forth;

Bound to establish new communities  
On every shore whose aspect favours  
hope 380

Or bold adventure; promising to skill  
And perseverance their deserved reward.

"Yes," he continued, kindling as he  
spoke,

"Change wide, and deep, and silently  
performed,

This Land shall witness; and as days roll  
 on, 385  
 Earth's universal frame shall feel the  
 effect;  
 Even till the smallest habitable rock,  
 Beaten by lonely billows, hear the songs  
 Of humanised society; and bloom  
 With civil arts, that shall breathe forth  
 their fragrance, 390  
 A grateful tribute to all-ruling Heaven.  
 From culture, unexclusively bestowed  
 On Albion's noble Race in freedom born,  
 Expect these mighty issues: from the  
 pains 394  
 And faithful care of unambitious schools  
 Instructing simple childhood's ready ear:  
 Thence look for these magnificent results!  
 —Vast the circumference of hope—and ye  
 Are at its centre, British Lawgivers;  
 Ah! sleep not there in shame! Shall Wis-  
 dom's voice 400  
 From out the bosom of these troubled  
 times  
 Repeat the dictates of her calmer mind,  
 And shall the venerable halls ye fill  
 Refuse to echo the sublime decree?  
 Trust not to partial care a general good;  
 Transfer not to futurity a work 406  
 Of urgent need.—Your Country must  
 complete  
 Her glorious destiny. Begin even now,  
 Now, when oppression, like the Egyptian  
 plague  
 Of darkness, stretched o'er guilty Europe,  
 makes 410  
 The brightness more conspicuous that in-  
 vests  
 The happy Island where ye think and  
 act;  
 Now, when destruction is a prime pur-  
 suit,  
 Show to the wretched nations for what  
 end 414  
 The powers of civil polity were given.”

Abruptly here, but with a graceful air,  
 The Sage broke off. No sooner had he  
 ceased  
 Than, looking forth, the gentle Lady said,  
 “Behold the shades of afternoon have  
 fallen

Upon this flowery slope; and see—be-  
 yond— 420  
 The silvery lake is streaked with placid  
 blue;  
 As if preparing for the peace of evening.  
 How temptingly the landscape shines!  
 The air  
 Breathes invitation; easy is the walk  
 To the lake's margin, where a boat lies  
 moored 425  
 Under a sheltering tree.”—Upon this hint  
 We rose together: all were pleased; but  
 most  
 The beauteous girl, whose cheek was  
 flushed with joy.  
 Light as a sunbeam glides along the hills  
 She vanished—eager to impart the scheme  
 To her loved brother and his shy com-  
 peer. 431  
 —Now was there bustle in the Vicar's  
 house  
 And earnest preparation.—Forth we went,  
 And down the vale along the streamlet's  
 edge  
 Pursued our way, a broken company, 435  
 Mute or conversing, single or in pairs.  
 Thus having reached a bridge, that over-  
 arched  
 The hasty rivulet where it lay becalmed  
 In a deep pool, by happy chance we saw  
 A twofold image; on a grassy bank 440  
 A snow-white ram, and in the crystal  
 flood  
 Another and the same! Most beautiful,  
 On the green turf, with his imperial front  
 Shaggy and bold, and wreathed horns su-  
 perb,  
 The breathing creature stood; as beauti-  
 ful, 445  
 Beneath him, showed his shadowy coun-  
 terpart.  
 Each had his glowing mountains, each  
 his sky,  
 And each seemed centre of his own fair  
 world:  
 Antipodes unconscious of each other,  
 Yet, in partition, with their several  
 spheres, 450  
 Blended in perfect stillness, to our sight!

“Ah! what a pity were it to disperse,

Or to disturb, so fair a spectacle,  
And yet a breath can do it!"

These few words  
The Lady whispered, while we stood and  
gazed 455

Gathered together, all in still delight,  
Not without awe. Thence passing on,  
she said

In like low voice to my particular ear,  
"I love to hear that eloquent old Man  
Pour forth his meditations, and descant  
On human life from infancy to age. 461  
How pure his spirit! in what vivid hues  
His mind gives back the various forms  
of things,

Caught in their fairest, happiest, atti-  
tude!

While he is speaking, I have power to  
see 465

Even as he sees; but when his voice hath  
ceased,

Then, with a sigh, sometimes I feel, as  
now,

That combinations so serene and bright  
Cannot be lasting in a world like ours,  
Whose highest beauty, beautiful as it  
is, 470

Like that reflected in yon quiet pool,  
Seems but a fleeting sunbeam's gift, whose  
peace

The sufferance only of a breath of air!"

More had she said—but sportive shouts  
were heard

Sent from the jocund hearts of those two  
Boys, 475

Who, bearing each a basket on his arm,  
Down the green field came tripping after  
us.

With caution we embarked; and now the  
pair

For prouder service were address; but  
each,

Wishful to leave an opening for my  
choice, 480

Dropped the light oar his eager hand had  
seized.

Thanks given for that becoming courtesy,  
Their place I took—and for a grateful  
office

Pregnant with recollections of the time

When, on thy bosom, spacious Winder-  
mere! 485

A Youth, I practised this delightful art;  
Tossed on the waves alone, or 'mid a  
crew

Of joyous comrades. Soon as the ready  
marge

Was cleared, I dipped, with arms ac-  
cordant, oars

Free from obstruction; and the boat ad-  
vanced 490

Through crystal water, smoothly as a  
hawk,

That, disentangled from the shady boughs  
Of some thick wood, her place of covert,  
cleaves

With correspondent wings the abyss of  
air.

—"Observe," the Vicar said, "yon rocky  
isle 495

With birch-trees fringed; my hand shall  
guide the helm,

While thitherward we shape our course;  
or while

We seek that other, on the western shore;  
Where the bare columns of those lofty  
firs,

Supporting gracefully a massy dome 500  
Of sombre foliage, seem to imitate  
A Grecian temple rising from the Deep."

"Turn where we may," said I, "we  
cannot err

In this delicious region."—Cultured slopes,  
Wild tracts of forest-ground, and scat-  
tered groves, 505

And mountains bare, or clothed with  
ancient woods,

Surrounded us; and, as we held our way  
Along the level of the glassy flood,  
They ceased not to surround us; change  
of place,

From kindred features diversely com-  
bined, 510

Producing change of beauty ever new.

—Ah! that such beauty, varying in the  
light

Of living nature, cannot be portrayed  
By words, nor by the pencil's silent skill;  
But is the property of him alone 515  
Who hath beheld it, noted it with care,

And in his mind recorded it with love !  
 Suffice it, therefore, if the rural Muse  
 Vouchsafe sweet influence, while her  
     Poet speaks  
 Of trivial occupations well devised, 520  
 And unsought pleasures springing up by  
     chance;  
 As if some friendly Genius had ordained  
 That, as the day thus far had been  
     enriched  
 By acquisition of sincere delight,  
 The same should be continued to its  
     close. 525

One spirit animating old and young,  
 A gipsy-fire we kindled on the shore  
 Of the fair Isle with birch-trees fringed—  
     and there,  
 Merrily seated in a ring, partook  
 A choice repast—served by our young  
     companions 530  
 With rival earnestness and kindred glee.  
 Launched from our hands the smooth  
     stone skimmed the lake;  
 With shouts we raised the echoes;—  
     stiller sounds  
 The lovely Girl supplied—a simple song,  
 Whose low tones reached not to the  
     distant rocks 535  
 To be repeated thence, but gently sank  
 Into our hearts; and charmed the peace-  
     ful flood.

Rapaciously we gathered flowery spoils  
 From land and water; lilies of each hue—  
 Golden and white, that float upon the  
     waves, 540  
 And court the wind; and leaves of that  
     shy plant,  
 (Her flowers were shed) the lily of the  
     vale,  
 That loves the ground, and from the sun  
     withholds  
 Her pensive beauty; from the breeze her  
     sweets.

Such product, and such pastime, did  
     the place 545  
 And season yield; but, as we re-  
     embarked,  
 Leaving, in quest of other scenes, the  
     shore

Of that wild spot, the Solitary said  
 In a low voice, yet careless who might  
     hear,  
 “The fire, that burned so brightly to our  
     wish, 550  
 Where is it now?—Deserted on the  
     beach—  
 Dying, or dead! Nor shall the fanning  
     breeze  
 Revive its ashes. What care we for this,  
 Whose ends are gained? Behold an  
     emblem here  
 Of one day’s pleasure, and all mortal  
     joys! 555  
 And, in this unpremeditated slight  
 Of that which is no longer needed, see  
 The common course of human gratitude!”

This plaintive note disturbed not the  
     repose  
 Of the still evening. Right across the lake  
 Our pinnacle moves; then, coasting creek  
     and bay, 561  
 Glades we behold, and into thickets peep,  
 Where crouch the spotted deer; or raised  
     our eyes  
 To shaggy steepes on which the careless  
     goat  
 Browsed by the side of dashing water-  
     falls; 565  
 And thus the bark, meandering with the  
     shore,  
 Pursued her voyage, till a natural pier  
 Of jutting rock invited us to land.

Alert to follow as the Pastor led,  
 We clomb a green hill’s side; and, as we  
     clomb, 570  
 The Valley, opening out her bosom, gave  
 Fair prospect, intercepted less and less,  
 O’er the flat meadows and indented coast  
 Of the smooth lake, in compass seen:—  
     far off,  
 And yet conspicuous, stood the old  
     Church-tower, 575  
 In majesty presiding over fields  
 And habitations seemingly preserved  
 From all intrusion of the restless world  
 By rocks impassable and mountains huge.

Soft heath this elevated spot supplied,

And choice of moss-clad stones, whereon  
 we couched 581  
 Or sate reclined; admiring quietly  
 The general aspect of the scene; but each  
 Not seldom over anxious to make known  
 His own discoveries; or to favourite  
 points 585  
 Directing notice, merely from a wish  
 To impart a joy, imperfect while un-  
 shared.  
 That rapturous moment never shall I  
 forget  
 When these particular interests were  
 effaced  
 From every mind!—Already had the  
 sun, 590  
 Sinking with less than ordinary state,  
 Attained his western bound; but rays of  
 light—  
 Now suddenly diverging from the orb  
 Retired behind the mountain-tops or  
 veiled  
 By the dense air—shot upwards to the  
 crown 595  
 Of the blue firmament—aloft, and wide;  
 And multitudes of little floating clouds,  
 Through their ethereal texture pierced—  
 ere we,  
 Who saw, of change were conscious—had  
 become  
 Vivid as fire; clouds separately poised,—  
 Innumerable multitude of forms 600  
 Scattered through half the circle of the  
 sky;  
 And giving back, and shedding each on  
 each,  
 With prodigal communion, the bright  
 hues  
 Which from the unapparent fount of  
 glory . 605  
 They had imbibed, and ceased not to  
 receive.  
 That which the heavens displayed, the  
 liquid deep  
 Repeated; but with unity sublime!

While from the grassy mountain's open  
 side  
 We gazed, in silence hushed, with eyes  
 intent 610  
 On the refulgent spectacle, diffused

Through earth, sky, water, and all visible  
 space,  
 The Priest in holy transport thus ex-  
 claimed:

“Eternal Spirit! universal God!  
 Power inaccessible to human thought,  
 Save by degrees and steps which thou  
 hast deigned 616  
 To furnish; for this effluence of thyself,  
 To the infirmity of mortal sense  
 Vouchsafed; this local transitory type  
 Of thy paternal splendours, and the  
 pomp 620  
 Of those who fill thy courts in highest  
 heaven,  
 The radiant Cherubim;—accept the  
 thanks  
 Which we, thy humble Creatures, here  
 convened,  
 Presume to offer; we, who—from the  
 breast 624  
 Of the frail earth, permitted to behold  
 The faint reflections only of thy face—  
 Are yet exalted, and in soul adore!  
 Such as they are who in thy presence  
 stand

Unsullied, incorruptible, and drink  
 Imperishable majesty streamed forth 630  
 From thy empyreal throne, the elect of  
 earth  
 Shall be—divested at the appointed hour  
 Of all dishonour, cleansed from mortal  
 stain.  
 —Accomplish, then, their number; and  
 conclude  
 Time's weary course! Or if, by thy decree,  
 The consummation that will come by  
 stealth 636  
 Be yet far distant, let thy Word prevail,  
 Oh! let thy Word prevail, to take away  
 The sting of human nature. Spread the  
 law,  
 As it is written in thy holy book, 640  
 Throughout all lands: let every nation  
 hear  
 The high behest, and every heart obey;  
 Both for the love of purity, and hope  
 Which it affords, to such as do thy will  
 And persevere in good, that they shall  
 rise, 645

To have a nearer view of thee, in heaven.  
 —Father of good! this prayer in bounty  
     grant,  
 In mercy grant it, to thy wretched sons.  
 Then, nor till then, shall persecution  
     cease,  
 And cruel wars expire. The way is  
     marked, 650  
 The guide appointed, and the ransom  
     paid.  
 Alas! the nations, who of yore received  
 These tidings, and in Christian temples  
     meet  
 The sacred truth to acknowledge, linger  
     still;  
 Preferring bonds and darkness to a state  
 Of holy freedom, by redeeming love 656  
 Proffered to all, while yet on earth  
     detained.

“So fare the many; and the thoughtful  
     few,  
 Who in the anguish of their souls bewail  
 This dire perverseness, cannot choose but  
     ask, 660  
 Shall it endure?—Shall enmity and strife,  
 Falsehood and guile, be left to sow their  
     seed;  
 And the kind never perish? Is the hope  
 Fallacious, or shall righteousness obtain  
 A peaceable dominion, wide as earth, 665  
 And ne’er to fail? Shall that blest day  
     arrive  
 When they, whose choice or lot it is to  
     dwell  
 In crowded cities, without fear shall live  
 Studios of mutual benefit; and he,  
 Whom Morn awakens, among dews and  
     flowers 670  
 Of every clime, to till the lonely field,  
 Be happy in himself?—The law of faith  
 Working through love, such conquest  
     shall it gain,  
 Such triumph over sin and guilt achieve?  
 Almighty Lord, thy further grace im-  
     part! 675  
 And with that help the wonder shall be  
     seen  
 Fulfilled, the hope accomplished; and thy  
     praise  
 Be sung with transport and unceasing joy.

“Once,” and with wild demeanour, as  
     he spake,  
 On us the venerable Pastor turned 680  
 His beaming eye that had been raised to  
     Heaven,  
 “Once, while the Name, Jehovah, was a  
     sound  
 Within the circuit of this sea-girt isle  
 Unheard, the savage nations bowed the  
     head  
 To Gods delighting in remorseless deeds;  
 Gods which themselves had fashioned, to  
     promote 686  
 Ill purposes, and flatter foul desires.  
 Then, in the bosom of yon mountain-cove,  
 To those inventions of corrupted man  
 Mysterious rites were solemnised; and  
     there— 690  
 Amid impending rocks and gloomy  
     woods—  
 Of those terrific Idols some received  
 Such dismal service, that the loudest voice  
 Of the swollen cataracts (which now are  
     heard  
 Soft murmuring) was too weak to over-  
     come, 695  
 Though aided by wild winds, the groans  
     and shrieks  
 Of human victims, offered up to appease  
 Or to propitiate. And, if living eyes  
 Had visionary faculties to see  
 The thing that hath been as the thing  
     that is, 700  
 Aghast we might behold this crystal Mere  
 Bedimmed with smoke, in wreaths volu-  
     minous,  
 Flung from the body of devouring fires,  
 To Taranis erected on the heights  
 By priestly hands, for sacrifice performed  
 Exultingly, in view of open day 706  
 And full assemblage of a barbarous host;  
 Or to Andates, female Power! who gave  
 (For so they fancied) glorious victory.  
 —A few rude monuments of mountain-  
     stone 710  
 Survive; all else is swept away.—How  
     bright  
 The appearances of things! From such,  
     how changed  
 The existing worship; and with those  
     compared,

The worshippers how innocent and blest !  
 So wide the difference, a willing mind  
 Might almost think, at this affecting  
     hour, 716  
 That paradise, the lost abode of man,  
 Was raised again : and to a happy few,  
 In its original beauty, here restored.

“ Whence but from thee, the true and  
     only God, 720  
 And from the faith derived through Him  
     who bled  
 Upon the cross, this marvellous advance  
 Of good from evil ; as if one extreme  
 Were left, the other gained. — O ye, who  
     come 724  
 To kneel devoutly in yon reverend Pile,  
 Called to such office by the peaceful sound  
 Of sabbath bells ; and ye, who sleep in  
     earth,  
 All cares forgotten, round its hallowed  
     walls !  
 For you, in presence of this little band  
 Gathered together on the green hill-side,  
 Your Pastor is emboldened to prefer 731  
 Vocal thanksgivings to the eternal King ;  
 Whose love, whose counsel, whose com-  
     mands, have made  
 Your very poorest rich in peace of thought  
 And in good works ; and him, who is  
     endowed 735  
 With scantiest knowledge, master of all  
     truth  
 Which the salvation of his soul requires.  
 Conscious of that abundant favour show-  
     ered  
 On you, the children of my humble care,  
 And this dear land, our country, while on  
     earth 740  
 We sojourn, have I lifted up my soul,  
 Joy giving voice to fervent gratitude.  
 These barren rocks, your stern inheri-  
     tance ;  
 These fertile fields, that recompense your  
     pains ;  
 The shadowy vale, the sunny mountain-  
     top ; 745  
 Woods waving in the wind their lofty  
     heads,  
 Or hushed ; the roaring waters, and the  
     still—

They see the offering of my lifted hands,  
 They hear my lips present their sacrifice,  
 They know if I be silent, morn or even :  
 For, though in whispers speaking, the  
     full heart 751  
 Will find a vent ; and thought is praise  
     to him,  
 Audible praise, to thee, omniscient Mind,  
 From whom all gifts descend, all bless-  
     ings flow ! ”

This vesper-service closed, without de-  
     lay, 755  
 From that exalted station to the plain  
 Descending, we pursued our homeward  
     course,  
 In mute composure, o'er the shadowy  
     lake,  
 Under a faded sky. No trace remained  
 Of those celestial splendours ; grey the  
     vault— 760  
 Pure, cloudless, ether ; and the star of  
     eve  
 Was wanting ; but inferior lights appeared  
 Faintly, too faint almost for sight ; and  
     some  
 Above the darkened hills stood boldly  
     forth  
 In twinkling lustre, ere the boat attained  
 Her mooring-place ; where, to the shelter-  
     ing tree, 766  
 Our youthful Voyagers bound fast her  
     prow,  
 With prompt yet careful hands. This  
     done, we paced  
 The dewy fields ; but ere the Vicar's door  
 Was reached, the Solitary checked his  
     steps ; 770  
 Then, intermingling thanks, on each be-  
     stowed  
 A farewell salutation ; and, the like  
 Receiving, took the slender path that  
     leads  
 To the one cottage in the lonely dell :  
 But turned not without welcome promise  
     made 775  
 That he would share the pleasures and  
     pursuits  
 Of yet another summer's day, not loth  
 To wander with us through the fertile  
     vales,



## NOTES.

"If thou indeed derive thy light" (Inscription following title-page).

Written (earliest draft) some time after 1813; first printed (amongst *Poems of Sentiment and Reflection*) in ed. 1827. Expanded (1836), and placed in its present position in ed. 1845.—Ed.

### GUILT AND SORROW (page 23).

Thirty stanzas (xxii.—xxxiv., and xxxviii.—l.) of *Guilt and Sorrow* were printed in the *Lyrical Ballads* of 1798, under the title of *The Female Vagrant*. This poem of 1798—much altered from time to time, and ultimately cut down to twenty-five stanzas—appeared in successive edd. of the Poetical Works from 1815 to 1843. The whole, as it now stands, was first printed in the vol. entitled *Poems, Chiefly of Early and Late Years* (1842). "Beside the changes made in these stanzas by Wordsworth from the point of view of poetic art, there are others the object of which seems to be to moderate the force of his indictment of society" (Dowden).—Ed.

"And, hovering, round it often did a raven fly" (page 25, l. 81).

From a short MS. poem read to me when an undergraduate, by my schoolfellow and friend, Charles Farish, long since deceased. The verses were by a brother of his, a man of promising genius, who died young.—W.

### THE BORDERERS (page 37).

This Dramatic Piece, as noticed in its title-page, was composed in 1795-6. It lay nearly from that time till within the last two or three months unregarded among my papers, without being mentioned even to my most intimate friends. Having, however, impressions upon my mind which made me unwilling to destroy the MS., I determined to undertake the responsibility of publishing it during my own life, rather than impose upon my successors the task of deciding its fate. Accordingly it has been revised with some care; but, as it was at first written, and is now published, without any view to its exhibition upon the stage, not the slightest alteration has been made in the conduct of the story, or the composition of the characters; above all, in respect to the two leading Persons of the Drama, I felt no inducement to make any change. The study of human nature suggests this awful truth, that, as in the trials to which life subjects us, sin and crime are apt to start from their very opposite qualities, so are there no limits to the hardening of the heart, and the perversion of the understanding to which they may carry their slaves. During my long residence in France, while the revolution was rapidly

advancing to its extreme of wickedness, I had frequent opportunities of being an eye-witness of this process, and it was while that knowledge was fresh upon my memory, that the Tragedy of "The Borderers" was composed.—W.

### TO A BUTTERFLY (page 79).

The following pseudonyms occur in Wordsworth's poems:—*Emmeline*, *Emma*=Dorothy, Dora, the poet's sister; *Laura*=Dora his daughter (until after her death in 1847); *Edward*=Johnnie, the household name of his eldest born. Each of these poetical substitutes, it will be observed, is the exact metrical or accentual equivalent of the baptismal name for which it stands. The identity of the pseudonym *Louisa* (*Poems Founded on the Affections*, No. VI.) has been recently discussed (*Athenæum*, Sept. 15; Oct. 14, 21, 1894). If *Louisa* was chosen—as the above-mentioned names undoubtedly were—on the principle of metrical equivalence, then the "young lady" so named by the poet cannot have been either Dorothy his sister, or Mary his wife. It is possible that by *Louisa* Wordsworth may have intended his wife's sister, the "wild-hearted maid," Joanna Hutchinson; nor should the opening lines of the poem *To Joanna*—which, rightly understood, amount to nothing more than merry banter—be regarded as constituting a solid argument against this view. The case of *Lycoris* is irrelevant, and need not be discussed here.—Ed.

### THE MOTHER'S RETURN (page 81).

This poem was written by Dorothy Wordsworth at Coleorton, on the eve of the return of Wordsworth and his wife from London where they had spent a month (prob. April) in 1807.—Ed.

### THE NORMAN BOY (page 91).

"Among ancient Trees there are few, I believe, at least in France, so worthy of attention as an Oak which may be seen in the 'Pays de Chaux,' about a league from Yvetot, close to the church, and in the burial-ground of Allonville."

"The height of this Tree does not answer to its girth; the trunk, from the roots to the summit, forms a complete cone; and the inside of this cone is hollow throughout the whole of its height."

"Such is the oak of Allonville, in its state of nature. The hand of Man, however, has endeavoured to impress upon it a character still more interesting, by adding a religious feeling to the respect which its age naturally inspires."

"The lower part of its hollow trunk has been transformed into a Chapel of six or seven feet in diameter, carefully wainscotted and paved, and an open iron gate guards the humble Sanctuary."

"Leading to it there is a staircase, which twists round the body of the Tree. At certain seasons of the year divine service is performed in this Chapel.

"The summit has been broken off many years, but there is a surface at the top of the trunk, of the diameter of a very large tree, and from it rises a pointed roof, covered with slates, in the form of a steeple, which is surmounted with an iron Cross, that rises in a picturesque manner from the middle of the leaves, like an ancient Hermitage above the surrounding Wood.

"Over the entrance to the Chapel an Inscription appears, which informs us it was erected by the Abbé du Détroit, Curate of Allonville in the year 1696; and over a door is another, dedicating it 'To Our Lady of Peace.'"

Vide No. 14, *Saturday Magazine*.—W.

#### TO — (page 110).

No doubt addressed to the Poet's daughter Dora. See *The Longest Day*, stanza xvi.—Ed.

#### THE EMIGRANT MOTHER (page 120).

This poem was written in the orchard, Town-end, Grasmere, in the spring of 1802.—Ed.

#### TO THE DAISY (page 157).

This poem, and two others to the same flower, were written in the year 1802; which is mentioned, because in some of the ideas, though not in the manner in which those ideas are connected, and likewise even in some of the expressions, there is a resemblance to passages in a poem (lately published) of Mr. Montgomery's, entitled "A Field Flower." This being said, Mr. Montgomery will not think any apology due to him; I cannot, however, help addressing him in the words of the Father of English Poets:

"Though it happe me to rehersin  
That ye han in your freshe songs saied,  
Forberth me, and beth not ill apaid,  
Sith that ye se I doe it in the honour  
Of Love, and eke in service of the Flour."—W.  
1807.—W.

#### THE SEVEN SISTERS (page 161).

The story of this poem is from the German of Frederica Brun [*flor.* 1765—1835.—Ed.].—W.

#### THE DANISH BOY (page 165).

"These stanzas were designed to introduce a Ballad upon the Story of a Danish Prince who had fallen from Battle, and, for the sake of the valuables about him, was murdered by the Inhabitant of a Cottage in which he had taken refuge. The House fell under a curse, and the Spirit of the Youth, it was believed, haunted the Valley where the crime had been committed."—W. 1827.

#### THE WAGGONER (page 173).

Several years after the event that forms the subject of the poem, in company with my friend, the late Mr. Coleridge, I happened to fall in with the person to whom the name of Benjamin is given. Upon our expressing regret that we had

not, for a long time, seen upon the road either him or his waggon, he said:—"They could not do without me; and as to the man who was put in my place, no good could come out of him; he was a man of no ideas."

The fact of my discarded hero's getting the horses out of a great difficulty with a word, as related in the poem, was told me by an eyewitness.—W.

"The bird that is round and round, is  
The bird that is round and round, is  
The bird that is round and round, is  
(page 173, l. 3).

When the poem was first written the note of the bird was thus described:

"The Night-hawk is singing his frog-like tune,  
Twirling his watchman's rattle about—"

but from unwillingness to startle the reader at the outset by so bold a mode of expression, the passage was altered as it now stands.—W.

After the line, "Can any mortal clog come to her?" (p. 173, l. 28) followed in the MS. an incident which has been kept back. Part of the suppressed verses shall here be given as a gratification of private feeling, which the well-disposed reader will find no difficulty in excusing. They are now printed for the first time.

Can any mortal clog come to her?  
It can:

But Benjamin, in his vexation,  
Possesses inward consolation;  
He knows his ground, and hopes to find  
A spot with all things to his mind,  
An upright mural block of stone,  
Mol't with pure water trickling down.  
A slender spruce; but kind to man  
It is, a true Samaritan;  
Close to the highway, pouring out  
Its offering from a chink or spout;  
Whence all, how'er athirst, or drooping  
With toil, may drink, and without stooping.

Cries Benjamin "Where is it, where?  
Voice it hath none, but must be near."  
—A star, declining towards the west,  
Upon the watery surface threw  
Its image tremulously impress,  
That just marked out the object and withdrew  
Right welcome service!

#### ROCK OF NAMES!<sup>1</sup>

Light is the strain, but not unjust  
To Thee and Thy memorial-trust  
That once seemed only to express  
Love that was love in idleness;  
Tokens, as year hath followed year  
How changed, alas, in character!  
For they were graven on thy smooth breast  
By hands of those my soul loved best;  
Meek women, men as true and brave  
As ever went to a hopeful grave:  
Their hands and mine, when side by side  
With kindred zeal and mutual pride,

<sup>1</sup> The "Rock of Names" is at Thirlmere, "on the right hand of the road a short way past Waterhead." Upon it were carved the initials of William, Dorothy and John Wordsworth, of S. T. Coleridge, and of Mary and Sarah Hutchinson.—Ed.

We worked until the Initials took  
Shapes that defied a mortal look.—  
Long as for us a casual feeling  
Survives, or one in mood of feeling,  
The power, dear Rock, art and thee cast,  
Thy monumental power, shall last  
For me and mine! I thought of pain,  
That would invade it or profane!  
Take all in kindness then, as said  
With a cold heart but playful head;  
And . . . . . Thou, loved Rock! to keep  
Thy charge, when we are laid asleep."—W.

"She was a Phantom of delight" (page 186).

"She was a Phantom of delight," he [Wordsworth] said, was written 'on his dear wife.' (Hon. Justice Coleridge in *Memoirs of Wordsworth*, ii. 306.)—Ed.

"O Nightingale! thou surely art" (page 186).

Written probably at Coleorton, in Nov. or Dec., 1806.—Ed.

### RESOLUTION AND INDEPENDENCE (page 195).

W. wrote as follows to some friends who had received a copy of *Resolution and Independence* in manuscript:—"I will explain to you in prose my feelings in writing that poem. . . . I describe myself as having been exalted to the highest pitch of delight by the joyousness and beauty of nature; and then as depressed, even in the midst of those beautiful objects, to the lowest dejection and despair. A young poet in the midst of the happiness of nature is described as overwhelmed by the thoughts of the miserable reverses which have befallen the happiest of all men, viz. poets. I think of this till I am so deeply impressed with it, that I consider the manner in which I was rescued from my dejection and despair almost as an interposition of Providence. A person reading the poem with feelings like mine will have been awed and controlled, expecting something spiritual or supernatural. What is brought forward? A lonely place, 'a pond by which an old man *was*, far from all house or home:' not *stood*, nor *sat*, but *was*—the figure presented in the most naked simplicity possible. This feeling of spirituality or supernaturalness is again referred to as being strong in my mind in this passage. How came he here? thought I, or what can he be doing? I then describe him, whether ill or well is not for me to judge with perfect confidence; but this I *can* confidently affirm, that though I believe God has given me a strong imagination, I cannot conceive a figure more impressive than that of an old man like this, the survivor of a wife and ten children, travelling alone among the mountains and all lonely places, carrying with him his own fortitude, and the necessities which an unjust state of society has laid upon him."—*Memoirs of Wordsworth*, i. 172, 173.

### THE THORN (page 197).

This Poem ought to have been preceded by an introductory Poem, which I have been prevented from writing by never having felt myself in a mood when it was probable that I should write it well. The character which I have here introduced speaking is sufficiently common. The Reader will perhaps have a general notion of it,

if he has ever known a man, a captain of a small trading vessel, for example, who being past the middle age of life, had retired upon an annuity or small independent income to some village or country town of which he was not a native, or in which he had not been accustomed to live. Such men, having little to do, become credulous and talkative from indolence; and from the same cause, and other predisposing causes by which it is probable that such men may have been affected, they are prone to superstition. On which account it appeared to me proper to select a character like this to exhibit some of the general laws by which superstition acts upon the mind. Superstitious men are almost always men of slow faculties and deep feelings; their minds are not loose, but adhesive; they have a reasonable share of imagination, by which word I mean the faculty which produces impressive effects out of simple elements; but they are utterly destitute of fancy, the power by which pleasure and surprise are excited by sudden varieties of situation and by accumulated imagery.

It was my wish in this poem to show the manner in which such men cleave to the same ideas; and to follow the turns of passion, always different, yet not palpably different, by which their conversation is swayed. I had two objects to attain; first, to represent a picture which should not be unimpressive, yet consistent with the character that should describe it; secondly, while I adhered to the style in which such persons describe, to take care that words, which in their minds are impregnated with passion, should likewise convey passion to Readers who are not accustomed to sympathize with men feeling in that manner or using such language. It seemed to me that this might be done by calling in the assistance of Lyrical and rapid Metre. It was necessary that the Poem, to be natural, should in reality move slowly; yet I hoped that, by the aid of the metre, to those who should at all enter into the spirit of the Poem, it would appear to move quickly. The Reader will have the kindness to excuse this note, as I am sensible that an introductory Poem is necessary to give the Poem its full effect.

Upon this occasion I will request permission to add a few words closely connected with 'The Thorn' and many other Poems in these volumes. There is a numerous class of readers who imagine that the same words cannot be repeated without tautology: this is a great error: virtual tautology is much oftener produced by using different words when the meaning is exactly the same. Words, a Poet's words more particularly, ought to be weighed in the balance of feeling, and not measured by the space which they occupy upon paper. For the Reader cannot be too often reminded that Poetry is passion: it is the history or science of feelings. Now every man must know that an attempt is rarely made to communicate impassioned feelings without something of an accompanying consciousness of the inadequateness of our own powers, or the deficiencies of language. During such efforts there will be a craving in the mind, and as long as it is unsatisfied the speaker will cling to the same words, or words of the same character. There are also various other reasons why repetition and apparent tautology are fre-

quently beauties of the highest kind. Among the chief of these reasons is the interest which the mind attaches to words, not only as symbols of the passion, but as *things*, active and efficient, which are of themselves part of the passion. And further, from a spirit of fondness, exaltation, and gratitude, the mind luxuriates in the repetition of words which appear successfully to communicate its feelings. The truth of these remarks might be shown by innumerable passages from the Bible, and from the impassioned poetry of every nation. "Awake, awake, Deborah!" &c. Judges, chap. v., verses 12th, 27th, and part of 28th. See also the whole of that tumultuous and wonderful Poem.—W. 1800—1805.

SONG AT THE FEAST, &c. (page 203).

Henry Lord Clifford, &c., &c., who is the subject of this poem, was the son of John Lord Clifford, who was slain at Towton Field, which John Lord Clifford, as is known to the reader of English history, was the person who after the battle of Wakefield slew, in the pursuit, the young Earl of Rutland, son of the Duke of York, who had fallen in the battle, "in part of revenge" (say the Authors of the "History of Cumberland and Westmoreland"); "for the Earl's Father had slain him." A deed which worthily blimished the author (saith Speed); but who, as he adds, "dare promise anything temperate of himself in the heat of martial fury? chiefly, when it was resolved not to leave any branch of the York line standing; for so one maketh this Lord to speak." This, no doubt, I would observe by the bye, was an action sufficiently in the vindictive spirit of the times, and yet not altogether so bad as represented; "for the Earl was no child, as some writers would have him, but able to bear arms, being sixteen or seventeen years of age, as is evident from this, (say the Memoirs of the Countess of Pembroke, who was laudably anxious to wipe away, as far as could be, this stigma from the illustrious name to which she was born,) that he was the next child to King Edward the Fourth, which his mother had by Richard Duke of York, and that King was then eighteen years of age; and for the small distance between her children, see Austin Vincent, in his 'Book of Nobility,' p. 622, where he writes of them all." It may further be observed, that Lord Clifford, who was then himself only twenty-five years of age, had been a leading man and commander two or three years together in the army of Lancaster, before this time; and, therefore, would be less likely to think that the Earl of Rutland might be ericted to mercy from his youth.—But independent of this act, at best a cruel and savage one, the family of Clifford had done enough to draw upon them the vehement hatred of the House of York: so that after the Battle of Towton there was no hope for them but in flight and concealment. Henry, the subject of the poem, was deprived of his estate and honours during the space of twenty-four years; all which time he lived as a shepherd in Yorkshire, or in Cumberland, where the estate of his father-in-law (Sir Lancelot Threlkeld) lay. He was restored to his estate and honours in the first year of Henry the Seventh. It is recorded that, "when called to Parliament, he behaved nobly and

wisely; but otherwise came seldom to London or the Court; and rather delighted to live in the country, where he repaired several of his Castles, which had gone to decay during the late troubles." Thus far is chiefly collected from Nicholson and Burn; and I can add, from my own knowledge, that there is a tradition current in the village of Threlkeld and its neighbourhood, his principal retreat, that, in the course of his shepherd-life, he had acquired great astronomical knowledge. I cannot conclude this note without adding a word upon the subject of those numerous and noble feudal edifices, spoken of in the poem, the ruins of some of which are, at this day, so great an ornament to that interesting country. The Cliffords had always been distinguished for an honourable pride in these Castles; and we have seen that, after the wars of York and Lancaster, they were rebuilt; in the civil wars of Charles the First they were again laid waste, and again restored almost to their former magnificence by the celebrated Lady Anne Clifford, Countess of Pembroke, &c., &c. Not more than twenty-five years after this was done, when the estates of Clifford had passed into the family of Tufton, three of these Castles, namely, Brough, Brougham, and Pendragon, were demolished, and the timber and other materials sold by Thomas Earl of Thanet. We will hope that, when this order was issued, the Earl had not consulted the text of Isaiah, 58th chap. 12th verse, to which the inscription placed over the gate of Pendragon Castle, by the Countess of Pembroke (I believe his grandmother), at the time she repaired that structure, refers the reader:—"And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in." The Earl of Thanet, the present possessor of the Estates, with a due respect for the memory of his ancestors, and a proper sense of the value and beauty of these remains of antiquity, has (I am told) given orders that they shall be preserved from all depredations.—W.

"Earth helped him with the cry of blood"  
(page 204, l. 27).

This line is from "The Battle of Bosworth Field," by Sir John Beaumont (brother to the Dramatist), whose poems are written with much spirit, elegance, and harmony; and have deservedly been reprinted lately in Chalmers' "Collection of English Poets."—W.

"And both the undying fish that swim  
Through Bowscale-tarn," &c. (p. 205, ll. 122, 123).

It is imagined by the people of the country that there are two immortal fish, inhabitants of this tarn, which lies in the mountains not far from Threlkeld.—Blencatharn, mentioned before, is the old and proper name of the mountain vulgarly called Saddle-back.—W.

"Armour rusting in his halls  
On the blood of Clifford calls" (p. 205, ll. 142, 143).

The martial character of the Cliffords is well known to the readers of English history; but it may not be improper here to say, by way of comment on these lines and what follows, that

besides several others who perished in the same manner, the four immediate progenitors of the person in whose hearing this is supposed to be spoken, all died in the field.—W.

*LINES COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE  
TINTERN ABBEY (page 205).*

I have not ventured to call this Poem an Ode: out it was written with a hope that in the transitions and the impassioned music of the versification, would be found the principal requisites, of that species of composition.—W. 1802-5.

*LAODAMIA (page 209).*

In 1827 a change of unique importance—amounting to an absolute reversal of the central motive of the poem—was made in the penultimate stanza of *Laodamia*. In edd. 1815, 1820 the heroine's love, while described as at war with Reason, is expressly declared guiltless; and she is directed to the serene region tenanted by happy Ghosts, there "to gather flowers of blissful quiet." &c., &c. In 1827 all this is reversed. Love, indulged "in Reason's spite," is now declared a crime; and *Laodamia*, as manifestly guilty, is "doomed to wander in a grosser clime, Apart from happy Ghosts." In 1832 the severity of the sentence is mitigated: not now to dateless exile from the presence of her beloved, but to a limited period of exclusion—an expiatory or purgatorial term of banishment—is she sentenced by "the just Gods whom no weak pity moves." Changes made subsequently to 1832 in no way affect the question of *Laodamia's* doom. The several forms successively assumed by this stanza must now be given:—

Ah, judge her gently who so deeply loved!  
Her, who, in reason's spite, yet without crime,  
Was in a trance of passion thus beguiled:  
Delivered from the suffering state of love  
And these frail elements, to another sphere  
Of blissful quiet and unending bowers.

Edd. 1815, 1820.

By no weak pity might the Gods be moved;  
She who thus perished not without the crime  
Of Lovers that in Reason's spite have loved,  
Was doomed to wander in a grosser clime  
Apart from happy Ghosts—that gather flowers  
Of blissful quiet and unending bowers.

Ed. 1827.

Edd. 1832 and 1836 follow ed. 1827 exactly, except in line 4, which in them runs as follows:—

"Was doomed to wear out her appointed time."

She who, though warmly, exhorted, and reproved,  
Thus died, from passion desperate to a crime—  
By the just Gods, whom no weak pity moved,  
Was doomed to wear out her appointed time  
Apart from happy Ghosts, that gather flowers, &c.

Edd. 1832-36.

Our text follows the version of edd. 1845 and 1849. In defence of the change effected in 1827, Wordsworth wrote to his nephew John Wordsworth in 1831:—"As first written, the heroine was dismissed to happiness in Elysium. To what purpose then the mission of Protesilaus? He exhorts her to moderate her passion; the exhortation is fruitless, and no punishment follows. So it stood: at present she is placed among unhappy ghosts for disregard of the exhortation. Virgil also places her there; but compare the two passages and give me your opinion" (*William Wordsworth*, by Elizabeth

Wordsworth, p. 131). Thus *Laodamia* probably owes the mitigated doom subsequently (ed. 1832) pronounced upon her to the interposition of the poet's nephew John Wordsworth.—Ed.

*DION (page 212).*

This poem began with the following stanza, which has been displaced on account of its detaining the reader too long from the subject, and as rather precluding, than preparing for the due effect of the allusion to the genius of Plato:

"Fair is the Swan, whose majesty, prevailing,"  
&c., &c., &c.—W.

*"Living hill" (page 217, l. 114).*

"awhile the living hill  
Heaved with convulsive throes, and all was still."  
DR. DARWIN.—W.

*THE WISHING-GATE DESTROYED  
(page 223).*

"In the Vale of Grasmere, by the side of the old highway leading to Ambleside, is a gate, which, time out of mind, has been called the Wishing-gate."

Having been told, upon what I thought good authority, that this gate had been destroyed, and the opening, where it hung, walled up, I gave vent immediately to my feelings in these stanzas. But going to the place some time after, I found, with much delight, my old favourite unmolested.—W.

*PETER BELL (page 230).*

After line 515 occurred the stanza (immortalised by Shelley) omitted by Wordsworth after 1819:

"Is it a party in a parlour?  
Cramm'd, just as they on earth were cram'd—  
Some of mine youth, some sipping tea,  
But a few of their friends,  
And silent and at ease."

In Crabb Robinson's Diary, June 6, 1812, we find: "Mrs. Basil Montagu told me she had no doubt she had suggested this image to Wordsworth by relating to him an anecdote. A person, walking in a friend's garden, looking in at a window, saw a company of ladies at a table near the window with countenances fixed. In an instant he was aware of their condition, and broke the window. He saved them from incipient suffocation."—Ed.

*MISCELLANEOUS SONNETS (page 250).*

Through the kindness of the author, Professor Edward Dowden, I am enabled to print at length the following valuable note upon the grouping of the Miscellaneous Sonnets. The note originally appeared in the Aldine Edition of Wordsworth's Poems, vol. iii, p. 327 (ed. 1892).—Ed.

"A group of Miscellaneous Sonnets was first published by Wordsworth in the 'Poems in two volumes,' 1807. In subsequent editions the number of Sonnets was increased, and the arrangement was altered. It seems to me evident that although these poems were written at various widely-parted times, they were finally arranged so as to illustrate one another, and form not indeed a linked chain of sonnets but a sequence as far as a sequence can be made from disconnected pieces by happy ordering. Let me try to show that this is the case with at least the thirty-six sonnets of Part I.

"I. Prefatory Sonnet on the Sonnet: contentment in limitation.

"II. The cottage of the poor; its beauty and happiness; contentment in limitation.

"III. The native vale of the child; the child's contentment in limitation altered by growth to manhood.

"IV. A little cottage, but glorified by Skiddaw and by the Muses.

"V. The glory of Skiddaw and its streams, though unsung by the Muses.

"VI. The glory of a little mountain stream glorified by memory and the affections.

"VII. A mountain lake, glorified even more by human love than by Fancy and the Muses.

"VIII. Vale and mountain glorified by friendship and the art of music.

"IX. Immortality conferred on the beauty of nature by a friend's art of painting.

"X. True art springs from the human heart, and all external things are modified by human affections.

"XI. Fancy and the Muse also deal with outward nature and add a grace and dignity to it.

"XII, XIII, XIV, three sonnets 'To Sleep,' stand unconnected with what precedes and serve as a resting-place.

"XV. The simplicity of the life of nature; the cumbrous pride of the artificial life.

"XVI. Walton; the happiness of a life 'nobly versed in simple discipline.'

"XVII. Dyer; the modesty and simplicity of his verse.

"XVIII. 'Peter Bell,' a poem of nature, ill received in an artificial age.

"XIX. Loss of cottage simplicity and its joys: the decay of spinning.

"XX. Spinning—a lost art: intellectual pride of the age.

"XXI. Pious use of the cottage fleece on Easter Sunday: contrast with these days of mechanical progress.

"XXII. Decay of rustic piety: Easter and Christmas church-going.

"XXIII. Piety of rural nuptials: love and religion united.

"XXIV-XXVI. Love and devotion have fitly led up to the sonnets translated from Michael Angelo, on mortal love leading to God.

"XXVII. And here is a fitting place for the contemplation of Death.

"XXVIII, XXIX. Beauty and repose in death a source of faith.

"XXX. But there are glad childlike hearts untouched by great solemnities, yet pure and sacred: mystery of the sea.

"XXXI. The 'reverential fear' of the sea, connected with a ship setting forth.

"XXXII. A ship singled out for love.

"XXXIII. How few of these glories and mysteries of Nature are felt by us! The mystery and beauty of the sea.

"XXXIV. The poets of Fashion contrasted with the poet of Nature.

"XXXV. Ennui and misanthropy of the poet of worldlings; how true Imagination transmutes the sorrows of life.

"XXXVI. Memorial Sonnet to Ransley Calvert, who enabled the author to live the life of a poet.

"The reader who follows and verifies the above analysis can hardly doubt that Wordsworth was studious to arrange his sonnets with a view to their mutual illustration."

Page 250, Dedication, l. 14.

"Something less than joy, but more than dull content."

COUNTRESS OF WINCHILSEA.—W.

"Wild Redbreast!" &c. (Sonnet xl, page 272).

This Sonnet, as Poetry, explains itself, yet the scene of the incident having been a wild wood, it may be doubted, as a point of natural history, whether the bird was aware that his attentions were bestowed upon a human, or even a living, creature. But a Redbreast will perch upon the foot of a gardener at work, and alight on the handle of the spade when his hand is half upon it—this I have seen. And under my own roof I have witnessed affecting instances of the creature's friendly visits to the chambers of sick persons, as described in the verses to the Redbreast, p. 143. One of these welcome intruders used frequently to roost upon a nail in the wall, from which a picture had hung, and was ready, as morning came, to pipe his song in the hearing of the invalid, who had been long confined to her room. These attachments to a particular person, when marked and continued, used to be reckoned ominous; but the superstition is passing away.—W.

AT THE GRAVE OF BURNS (page 284).

The following is extracted from the journal of my fellow-traveller, to which, as persons acquainted with my poems will know, I have been obliged on other occasions:

"Dumfries, August, 1803.

"On our way to the churchyard where Burns is buried, we were accompanied by a bookseller, who showed us the outside of Burns's house, where he had lived the last three years of his life, and where he died. It has a mean appearance, and is in a bye situation; the front whitewashed, dirty about the doors, as most Scotch houses are; flowering plants in the window. Went to visit his grave; he lies in a corner of the churchyard, and his second son, Francis Wallace, beside him. There is no stone to mark the spot; but a hundred guineas have been collected to be expended upon some sort of monument. 'There, said the bookseller, pointing to a pompous monument, 'lies Mr.—(I have forgotten the name)—a remarkably clever man; he was an attorney, and scarcely ever lost a cause he undertook. Burns made many a laupoon upon him, and there they rest as you see.' We looked at Burns's grave with melancholy and painful reflections, repeating to each other his own poet's epitaph:—

'Is there a man,' &c.

"The churchyard is full of gravestones and expensive monuments, in all sorts of fantastic shapes—obelisk-wise, pillar-wise, &c. When our guide had left us we turned again to Burns's grave, and afterwards went to his house, wishing to enquire after Mrs. Burns, who had gone to spend some time by the sea-shore with her children. We spoke to the maid-servant at the door, who invited us forward, and we sat down in the parlour. The walls were coloured with a blue wash; on one side of the fire was a mahogany desk; opposite the window a clock, which Burns mentions, in one of his letters, having received as

a present. The house was cleanly and neat in the inside, the stairs of stone scoured white, the kitchen on the right side of the passage, the parlour on the left. In the room above the parlour the poet died, and his son, very lately, in the same room. The servant told us she had lived four years with Mrs. Burns, who was now in great sorrow for the death of Wallace. She said that Mrs. B.'s youngest son was now at Christ's Hospital. We were glad to leave Dumfries, where we could think of little but poor Burns, and his moving about on that unpoetic ground. In our road to Brownhill, the next stage, we passed Ellisland, at a little distance on our right—his farm-house. Our pleasure in looking round would have been still greater, if the road had led us nearer the spot.

"I cannot take leave of this country which we passed through to-day, without mentioning that we saw the Cumberland mountains within half-a-mile of Ellisland, Burns's house, the last view we had of them. Dryden has prettily described the connection, which this neighbourhood has with ours, when he makes Skiddaw say,—

"Scruffel, from the sky  
That Appennal's doth crown, with a most amorous eye  
Tells the woe every day, as my pride looks grim,  
Out threatening me with clouds, as I oft threaten him."

"These lines came to my brother's memory, as well as the Cumberland saying,—

"If Skiddaw hath a cap  
Scruffel wote well of that."

"We talked of Burns, and of the prospect he must have had, perhaps from his own door, of Skiddaw and his companions: indulging ourselves in the fancy that we might have been personally known to each other, and he have looked upon those objects with more pleasure for our sakes."—W.

#### SONNET COMPOSED AT — CASTLE. (page 292).

In the MS. copy of this Sonnet which Wordsworth sent to Walter Scott (Oct. 16, 1803) the first line ran as follows:

"Now, as I live, I pity that great Lord  
Whom mere despoise," &c.

"In that original shape," says Lockhart, "Scott always rectified it [the sonnet], and few lines in the language were more frequently in his mouth."—Ed.

#### THE BLIND HIGHLAND BOY (page 295).

In Ed. 1807, the vessel in which the boy embarked was a common wash-tub:

"But say, what was it? Thought of fear!  
Well may ye tremble when ye hear!  
—A Household Tub, like one of those  
Which women use to wash their clothes,  
This carried the blind Boy."

The shell was substituted (in 1815) for the tub, on the suggestion of Coleridge—a change of which Charles Lamb and Barron Field strongly disapproved.—Ed.

#### "Jones! as from Calais southward" (Sonnet III., page 304).

(See Dedication to Descriptive Sketches, p. 601.)

This excellent Person, one of my earliest and dearest friends, died in the year 1835. We were undergraduates together of the same year, at the same college; and companions in many a delightful ramble through his own romantic Country of North Wales. Much of the latter part of his life he passed in comparative solitude; which I know was often cheered by remembrance of our youthful adventures, and of the beautiful regions which, at home and abroad, we had visited together. Our long friendship was never subject to a moment's interruption,—and while revising these volumes for the last time, I have been so often reminded of my loss, with a not unpleasant sadness, that I trust the Reader will excuse this passing mention of a Man who well deserves from me something more than so brief a notice. Let me only add, that during the middle part of his life he resided many years (as Incumbent of the Living) at a Parsonage in Oxfordshire, which is the subject of the 7th of the "Miscellaneous Sonnets," Part 3.—W.

#### Sonnet VII. (page 305).

In this and a succeeding sonnet on the same subject, let me be understood as a Poet availing himself of the situation which the King of Sweden occupied, and of the principles avowed in his MANIFESTOS; as laying hold of these advantages for the purpose of embodying moral truths. This remark might, perhaps, as well have been suppressed; for to those who may be in sympathy with the course of these Poems, it will be superfluous; and will, I fear, be thrown away upon that other class, whose besotted admiration of the intoxicated despot hereafter placed in contrast with him, is the most melancholy evidence of degradation in British feeling and intellect which the times have furnished.—W.

#### NOVEMBER, 1806 (page 310).

"Danger which they fear, and honour which they understand not." Words in Lord Brooke's Life of Sir P. Sydney.—W.

#### "Zaragoza" (Sonnet XVI., page 316).

In this sonnet I am under some obligations to one of an Italian author, to which I cannot refer.—W.

#### THE GERMANS ON THE HEIGHTS OF HOCHHEIM (page 322).

The event is thus recorded in the journals of the day:—"When the Austrians took Hochheim, in one part of the engagement they got to the brow of the hill, whence they had their first view of the Rhine. They instantly halted—not a gun was fired—not a voice heard; they stood gazing on the river with those feelings which the events of the last fifteen years at once called up. Prince Schwartzenberg rode up to know the cause of this sudden stop; they then gave three cheers, rushed after the enemy, and drove them into the water."—W.

## THANKSGIVING ODE (page 329).

Wholly unworthy of touching upon the momentous subject here treated would that Poet be, before whose eyes the present distresses under which this kingdom labours could interpose a veil sufficiently thick to hide, or even to obscure, the splendour of this great moral triumph. If I have given way to exultation, unchecked by these distresses, it might be sufficient to protect me from a charge of insensibility, should I state my own belief that the sufferings will be transitory. Upon the wisdom of a very large majority of the British nation rested that generosity which poured out the treasures of this country for the deliverance of Europe: and in the same national wisdom, presiding in time of peace over an energy not inferior to that which has been displayed in war, *they* confide, who encourage a firm hope, that the cup of our wealth will be gradually replenished. There will, doubtless, be no few ready to indulge in regrets and repinings: and to find a morbid satisfaction, by aggravating these burthens in imagination; in order that calamity so confidently prophesied, as it has not taken the shape which their sagacity allotted to it, may appear as grievous as possible under another. But the body of the nation will not quarrel with the gain, because it might have been purchased at a less price: and, acknowledging in these sufferings, which they feel to have been in a great degree unavoidable, a consecration of their noble efforts, they will vigorously apply themselves to remedy the evil.

Nor is it at the expense of rational patriotism, or in disregard of sound philosophy, that I have given vent to feelings tending to encourage a martial spirit in the bosoms of my countrymen, at a time when there is a general outcry against the prevalence of these dispositions. The British army, both by its skill and valour in the field, and by the discipline which rendered it, to the inhabitants of the several countries where its operations were carried on, a protection from the violence of their own troops, has performed services that will not allow the language of gratitude and admiration to be suppressed or restrained (whatever be the temper of the public mind) through a scrupulous dread lest the tribute due to the past should prove an injurious incentive for the future. Every man deserving the name of Briton adds his voice to the chorus which extols the exploits of his countrymen, with a consciousness, at times overpowering the effort, that they transcend all praise. But this particular sentiment, thus irresistibly excited, is not sufficient. The nation would err grievously if she suffered the abuse which other states have made of military power to prevent her from perceiving that no people ever was or can be, independent, free, or secure, much less great, in any sane application of the word, without a cultivation of military virtues. Nor let it be overlooked, that the benefits derivable from these sources are placed within the reach of Great Britain, under conditions peculiarly favourable. The same insular position which, by rendering territorial incorporation impossible, utterly precludes the desire of conquest under the most seductive shape it can assume, enables her to rely, for her defence against foreign foes, chiefly upon a species of armed force from which

her own liberties have nothing to fear. Such are the privileges of her situation; and, by permitting, they invite her to give way to the courageous instincts of human nature, and to strengthen and refine them by culture.

But some have more than insinuated that a design exists to subvert the civil character of the English people by, unconstitutional applications and unnecessary increase of military power. The advisers and abettors of such a design, were it possible that it should exist, would be guilty of the most heinous crime, which, upon this planet, can be committed. Trusting that this apprehension arises from the delusive influences of an honourable jealousy, let me hope that the martial qualities which I venerate will be fostered by adhering to those good old usages which experience has sanctioned; and by availing ourselves of new means of indisputable promise: particularly by applying, in its utmost possible extent, that system of tuition whose master-spring is a habit of gradually enlightened subordination;—by imparting knowledge, civil, moral, and religious, in such measure that the mind, among all classes of the community, may love, admire, and be prepared and accomplished to defend, that country under whose protection its faculties have been unfolded, and its riches acquired;—by just dealing towards all orders of the state, so that, no members of it being trampled upon, courage may everywhere continue to rest immovably upon its ancient English foundation, personal self-respect;—by adequate rewards, and permanent honours, conferred upon the deserving;—by encouraging athletic exercises and manly sports among the peasantry of the country;—and by especial care to provide and support institutions, in which, during a time of peace, a reasonable proportion of the youth of the country may be instructed in military science.

I have only to add, that I should feel little satisfaction in giving to the world these limited attempts to celebrate the virtues of my country, if I did not encourage a hope that a subject, which it has fallen within my province to treat only in the mass, will, by other poets be illustrated in that detail which its importance calls for, and which will allow opportunities to give the merited applause to persons as well as to things.

The ode was published along with other pieces, now interspersed through these volumes.—W.

"Had it been a hymn, uttering the sentiments of a *multitude*, a *stanza* would have been indispensable. But though I have called it a 'Thanksgiving Ode,' strictly speaking it is not so, but a poem composed, or supposed to be composed, on the morning of the thanksgiving, uttering the sentiments of an *individual* upon that occasion. It is a *dramatised ejaculation*; and this, if anything can, must excuse the irregular frame of the metre." (Letter of Wordsworth to Southey, 1816, in *Memoirs* by Bishop Wordsworth, ii. 60, 61.)—En.

(Page 330, l. 122).

"Discipline the rule whereof is passion."

LORD BROOKE.—W.

Sonnet I. (page 333).

If in this sonnet I should seem to have borne a little too hard upon the personal appearance of the worthy Poissards of Calais, let me take



"*Tho' searching damp and many an envious  
flaw  
Have marred this Work;*" (page 342).

This picture of the Last Supper has not only been grievously injured by time, but the greatest part of it; if not the whole, is said to have been retouched, or painted over again. These niceties may be left to connoisseurs.—I speak of it as I felt. The copy exhibited in London some years ago, and the engraving by Morghen, are both admirable; but in the original is a power which neither of those works has attained, or even approached.—W.

"*Of Figures human and divine*" (page 343).

The Statues ranged round the spire and along the roof of the Cathedral of Milan, have been found fault with by persons whose exclusive taste is unfortunate for themselves. It is true that the same expense and labour, judiciously directed to purposes more strictly architectural, might have much heightened the general effect of the building; for, seen from the ground, the Statues appear diminutive. But the *coup d'œil*, from the best point of view, which is half way up the spire, must strike an unprejudiced person with admiration; and surely the selection and arrangement of the Figures is exquisitely fitted to support the religion of the country in the imaginations and feelings of the spectator. It was with great pleasure that I saw, during the two ascents which we made, several children, of different ages, tripping up and down the slender spire, and pausing to look around them, with feelings much more animated than could have been derived from these or the finest works of art, if placed within easy reach.—Remember also that you have the Alps on one side, and on the other the Apennines, with the plain of Lombardy between!—W.

"*Still, with those white-robed Shapes, a living  
Stream,  
The glacier Pillars join in solemn guise*" (page 347).

This Procession is a part of the sacramental service performed once a month. In the valley of Engelberg we had the good fortune to be present at the *Grand Festival* of the Virgin—but the Procession on that day, though consisting of upwards of 1,000 persons, assembled from all the branches of the sequestered valley, was much less striking (notwithstanding the sublimity of the surrounding scenery): it wanted both the simplicity of the other and the accompaniment of the Glacier-columns, whose sisterly resemblance to the *moving* Figures gave it a most beautiful and solemn peculiarity.—W.

*ON BEING STRANDED, &c.* (page 349).

Near the town of Boulogne, and overhanging the beach, are the remains of a tower which bears the name of Caligula, who here terminated his western expedition, of which these sea-shells were the boasted spoils. And at no great distance from these ruins, Buonaparte, standing upon a mound of earth, harangued his "Army of England," reminding them of the exploits of Cæsar, and pointing towards the white cliffs, upon which

their standards were to float. He recommended also a subscription to be raised among the soldiery to erect on that ground, in memory of the foundation of the "Legion of Honour," a Column—which was not completed at the time we were there.—W.

"*We mark majestic herds of cattle, free  
To ruminate*" (page 349).

This is a most grateful sight for an Englishman returning to his native land! Everywhere one misses in the cultivated grounds abroad, the animated and soothing accompaniment of animals ranging and selecting their own food at will.—W.

"*Far as St. Maurice, from yon eastern Forks*" (page 350).

LES FORCHES, the point at which the two chains of mountain-part, that embrace the Valais, which terminates at ST. MAURICE.—W.

—"ye that occupy  
*Your council-seats beneath the open sky,  
On Sarnen's Mount*" (page 350).

SARNEN, one of the two capitals of the Canton of Underwalden; the spot here alluded to is close to the town, and is called the Landenberg, from the tyrant of that name, whose château formerly stood there. On the 1st of January, 1308, the great day which the confederated Heroes had chosen for the deliverance of their country, all the castles of the Governors were taken by force or stratagem; and the Tyrants themselves conducted, with their creatures, to the frontiers, after having witnessed the destruction of their strongholds. From that time the Landenberg has been the place where the Legislators of this division of the Canton assemble. The site, which is well described by Elbel, is one of the most beautiful in Switzerland.—W.

"*Calls me to pace her honoured Bridge—*" (page 351).

The bridges of Lucerne are roofed, and open at the sides, so that the passenger has, at the same time, the benefit of shade and a view of the magnificent country. The pictures are attached to the rafters; those from Scripture History, on the Cathedral Bridge, amount, according to my notes, to 240. Subjects from the Old Testament face the passenger as he goes towards the Cathedral, and those from the New as he returns. The pictures on these bridges, as well as those in most other parts of Switzerland, are not to be spoken of as works of art; but they are instruments admirably answering the purpose for which they were designed.—W.

—"although 'tis fair,  
*'Twill be another Yarrow*" (page 353, ll. 76, 77).

These words were quoted to me from "Yarrow Unvisited," by Sir Walter Scott, when I visited him at Abbotsford, a day or two before his departure for Italy: and the affecting condition in which he was when he looked upon Rome from the Janiculum Mount, was reported to me by a lady who had the honour of conducting him thither.—W.

"His sepulchral verse" (page 356, l. 241).

If any English reader should be desirous of knowing how far I am justified in thus describing the epitaphs of Chiabrera, he will find translated specimens of them on pp. 573-6, under the head of "Epitaphs and Elegiac Pieces."—W.

"This flowering broom's dear neighbourhood" (page 358).

In the course of this continental tour of 1837, Wordsworth was deeply impressed with the splendour and profusion of the flowering broom in the valleys and the more sheltered heights of the Apennines; and reluctantly owned the inferiority of the English to the French variety in respect of both beauty and fragrance. The note upon the Oxford movement which follows (and which should properly be read at the conclusion of this poem) was written, at the request of the poet, by his friend Frederick Faber.—Ed.

It would be ungenerous not to advert to the religious movement that, since the composition of these verses in 1837, has made itself felt, more or less strongly, throughout the English Church;—a movement that takes, for its first principle, a devout deference to the voice of Christian antiquity. It is not my office to pass judgment on questions of theological detail; but my own repugnance to the spirit and system of Romanism has been so repeatedly and, I trust, feelingly expressed, that I shall not be suspected of a leaning that way, if I do not join in the grave charge, thrown out, perhaps in the heat of controversy, against the learned and pious men to whose labours I allude. I speak apart from controversy; but, with strong faith in the moral temper which would elevate the present by doing reverence to the past, I would draw cheerful auguries for the English Church from this movement, as likely to restore among us a tone of piety more earnest and real than that produced by the mere formalities of the understanding, refusing, in a degree which I cannot but lament, that its own temper and judgment shall be controlled by those of antiquity.—W.

THE PINE OF MONTE MARIO (p. 358).

Within a couple of hours of my arrival at Rome, I saw from Monte Pincio, the Pine-tree as described in the sonnet; and, while expressing admiration at the beauty of its appearance, I was told by an acquaintance of my fellow-traveller, who happened to join us at the moment, that a price had been paid for it by the late Sir G. Beaumont, upon condition that the proprietor should not act upon his known intention of cutting it down.—W.

CAMALDOLI (page 368).

This famous sanctuary was the original establishment of Saint Romualdo (or Rumiwald, as our ancestors saxonised the name), in the 11th century, the ground (campo) being given by a Count Maldo. The Camaldolese, however, have spread wide as a branch of Benedictines, and may therefore be classed among the gentlemen of the monastic orders. The society comprehends two orders, monks and hermits; symbolised by their arms, two doves drinking out of the same cup. The monastery in which the monks here reside is beautifully situated, but a large unattractive

edifice, not unlike a factory. The hermitage is placed in a loftier and wilder region of the forest. It comprehends between twenty and thirty distinct residences, each including for its single hermit an inclosed piece of ground and three very small apartments. There are days of indulgence when the hermit may quit his cell, and when old age arrives, he descends from the mountain and takes his abode among the monks.

My companion had in the year 1831 fallen in with the monk, the subject of these two sonnets, who showed him his abode among the hermits. It is from him that I received the following particulars. He was then about forty years of age, but his appearance was that of an older man. He had been a painter by profession, but on taking orders changed his name from Santi to Raffaello, perhaps with an unconscious reference as well to the great Sanzio d'Urbino as to the archangel. He assured my friend that he had been thirteen years in the hermitage and had never known melancholy or ennui. In the little recess for study and prayer, there was a small collection of books. "I read only," said he, "books of asceticism and mystical theology." On being asked the names of the most famous mystics, he enumerated *Seraphini, San Giovanni della Croce, Saiti, Dimezzi, the Arcopagite* (supposing the work which bears his name to be really his), and with peculiar emphasis *Ricardo di San Vittori*. The works of *Saint Theresa* are also in high repute among ascetics. These names may interest some of my readers.

We heard that Raffaello was then living in the convent; my friend sought in vain to renew his acquaintance with him. It was probably a day of seclusion. The reader will perceive that these sonnets were supposed to be written when he was a young man.—W.

"What aim had they, the Pair of Monks" (page 363).

In justice to the Benedictines of Camaldoli, by whom strangers are so hospitably entertained, I feel obliged to notice that I saw among them no other figures at all resembling, in size and complexion, the two Monks described in this Sonnet. What was their office, or the motive which brought them to this place of mortification, which they could not have approached without being carried in this or some other way, a feeling of delicacy prevented me from enquiring. An account has before been given of the hermitage they were about to enter. It was visited by us towards the end of the month of May; yet snow was lying thick under the pine-trees, within a few yards of the gate.—W.

AT VALLOMEROSA (page 364).

The name of Milton is pleasantly connected with Vallombrosa in many ways. The pride with which the Monk, without any previous question from me, pointed out his residence, I shall not readily forget. It may be proper here to defend the Poet from a charge which has been brought against him, in respect to the passage in "Paradise Lost," where his name is mentioned. It is said, that he has erred in speaking of the trees there being deciduous, whereas they are, in fact, pines. The fault-finders are themselves mistaken; the natural woods of the region of Vallombrosa are

deciduous, and spread to a great extent; those near the convent are, indeed, mostly pines; but they are avenues of trees *planted* within a few steps of each other, and thus composing large tracts of wood; plots of which are periodically cut down. The appearance of those narrow avenues, upon steep slopes open to the sky, on account of the height which the trees attain by being *forced* to grow upwards, is often very impressive. My guide, a boy of about fourteen years old, pointed this out to me in several places.—W.

—"more high, the Dacian force,  
To hoof and finger mailed;" (p. 368, ll. 46, 47).

Here and infra, see Forsyth.—W.

#### THE RIVER DUDDON (page 375).

A Poet<sup>1</sup> whose works are not yet known as they deserve to be thus enters upon his description of the "Ruins of Rome:"

"The rising Sun  
Flames on the ruins in the purer air  
Lowering aloft;"

and ends thus—

"The setting Sun displays  
His visible grandeur from yon towers,  
As through two shady cliffs."

Mr. Crowe, in his excellent loco-descriptive Poem, "*Lewesdon Hill*," is still more expeditious, finishing the whole on a May-morning, before breakfast.

"To-morrow for severer thought, but now  
To breakfast, and keep festival to-day."

No one believes, or is desired to believe, that those Poems were actually composed within such limits of time; nor was there any reason why a prose statement should acquaint the Reader with the plain fact, to the detriment of poetic credibility. But, in the present case, I am compelled to mention, that the above series of Sonnets was the growth of many years;—the one which stands the 17th was the first produced; and others were added upon occasional visits to the Stream, or as recollections of the scenes upon its banks awakened a wish to describe them. In this manner I had proceeded insensibly, without perceiving that I was trespassing upon ground pre-occupied, at least as far as intention went, by Mr. Coleridge; who, more than twenty years ago, used to speak of writing a rural Poem, to be entitled "*The Brook*," of which he has given a sketch in a recent publication. But a particular subject, cannot, I think, much interfere with a general one; and I have been further kept from encroaching upon any right Mr. C. may still wish to exercise, by the restriction which the frame of the Sonnet imposed upon me, narrowing unavoidably the range of thought, and precluding, though not without its advantages, many graces to which a freer movement of verse would naturally have led.

<sup>1</sup> i.e. the Welshman John Dyer (1699-1759), author of *Grongar Hill* (1726), a kind of descriptive ode in octosyllabic verse, and of the two didactic poems in Miltonic blank verse, entitled, *The Ruins of Rome* (1740) and *The Fleeces* (1757). *Lewesdon Hill*, by the Rev. William Crowe, went through three editions between 1788 and 1804.—Ed.

May I not venture, then, to hope, that, instead of being a hindrance, by anticipation of any part of the subject, these Sonnets may remind Mr. Coleridge of his own more comprehensive design, and induce him to fulfil it?—There is a sympathy in streams,—one calleth to another;—and I would gladly believe, that "*The Brook*" will, ere long, murmur in concert with "*The Duddon*." But, asking pardon for this fancy, I need not scruple to say, that those verses must indeed be ill-fated which can enter upon such pleasant walks of nature, without receiving and giving inspiration. The power of waters over the minds of Poets has been acknowledged from the earliest ages;—through the "*Flumina aenem sylvasque inglorius*" of Virgil, down to the sublime apostrophe to the great rivers of the earth, by Armstrong, and the stiple ejaculation of Burns (chosen, if I recollect right, by Mr. Coleridge, as a motto, for his embryo "*Brook*");

"The Muse nae Poet ever fand her,  
Till by himself he lorned to wander,  
Adown some trotting burn's meander,  
AND NA' THINK LANG."—W.

"*There bloomed the strawberry of the wilderness;  
The trembling eyebright showed her sapphire blue*" (Sonnet vi., page 377).

These two lines are in a great measure taken from "*The Ravines of Spring, a Juvenile Poem*," by the Rev. Joseph Symonds. He was a native of Cumberland, and was educated in the vale of Grasmere, and at Hawkshead school: his poems are little known, but they contain passages of splendid description; and the versification of his "*Vision of Alfred*" is harmonious and animated. In describing the motions of the Sylphs, that constitute the strange machinery of his Poem, he uses the following illustrative simile—

—"Glancing from their plumes  
A changeful light the azure vault illumed,  
Less varying hues beneath the Pole adorn  
The streamy glories of the Boreal morn,  
That wavering to and fro their radiance shed  
On Bothnia's gulf with glassy ice o'erspread,  
Where the lone native, as he homeward glides,  
On polished sandals o'er the imprisoned tides,  
And still the balance of his frame preserves,  
Wheel'd on alternate foot in lengthening curves,  
Sees in a glance, above him and below,  
The rival heavens with equal splendour glow.  
Farther, by the centre of his world he seems;  
For all around with equal distance gleams  
Stars, moons, and meteors, his compass'd ray,  
And solemn midnight ponders the laws of day."

He was a man of ardent feeling, and his faculties of mind, particularly his memory, were extraordinary. Brief notice of his life ought to find a place in the history of Westmoreland.—W.

#### Sonnets XVII. and XVIII. (page 380).

The *EAGLE* requires a large domain for its support: but several pairs, not many years ago, were constantly resident in this country, building their nests in the steepes of Borrowdale, Wastdale, Ennerdale, and on the eastern side of Helvellyn. Often have I heard anglers speak of the grandeur of their appearance, as they hovered over Red Turn, in one of the coves of this mountain. The bird frequently returns, but is always destroyed.

Not long since, one visited Rydal lake, and remained some hours near its banks: the consternation which it occasioned among the different species of fowl, particularly the herons, was expressed by loud screams. The horse also is naturally afraid of the eagle.—There were several Roman stations among these mountains; the most considerable seems to have been in a meadow at the head of Windermere, established, undoubtedly, as a check over the Passes of Kirkstone, Dunmail-raise, and of Hardknot and Wrynose. On the margin of Rydal lake, a coin of Trajan was discovered very lately.—The ROMAN FORT here alluded to, called by the country people "*Hardknot Castle*," is most impressively situated half-way down the hill on the right of the road that descends from Hardknot into Eskdale. It has escaped the notice of most antiquarians, and is but slightly mentioned by Lysons. The DRUIDICAL CIRCLE is about half a mile to the left of the road ascending Stone-side from the vale of Duddon: the country people call it *Stunken Church*.

The reader who may have been interested in the foregoing Sonnets (which together may be considered as a Poem), will not be displeased to find in this place a prose account of the Duddon, extracted from Green's comprehensive "*Guide to the Lakes*," lately published. "The road leading from Conistown to Broughton is over high ground, and commands a view of the river Duddon; which, at high water, is a grand sight, having the beautiful and fertile lands of Lancashire and Cumberland stretching each way from its margin. In this extensive view, the face of nature is displayed in a wonderful variety of hill and dale; wooded grounds and buildings; amongst the latter Broughton Tower, seated on the crown of a hill, rising elegantly from the valley, is an object of extraordinary interest. Fertility on each side is gradually diminished, and lost in the superior heights of Blackcomb, in Cumberland, and the high lands between Kirkby and Ulverstone."

"The road from Broughton to Seathwaite is on the banks of the Duddon, and on its Lancashire side it is of various elevations. The river is an amusing companion, one while brawling and tumbling over rocky precipices, until the agitated water becomes again calm by arriving at a smoother and less precipitous bed, but its course is soon again ruffled, and the current thrown into every variety of foam which the rocky channel of a river can give to water."—*Wilde Green's Guide to the Lakes*, vol. I. pp. 22-23.

After all, the traveller would be most gratified who should approach this beautiful stream, neither at its source, as is done in the Sonnets, nor from its termination; but from Conistown over Walna Sear; first descending into a little circular valley, a collateral compartment of the long winding vale through which flows the Duddon. This recess, towards the close of September, when the after-grass of the meadows is still of a fresh green, with the leaves of many of the trees faded, but perhaps none fallen, is truly enchanting. At a point elevated enough to show the various objects in the valley, and not so high as to diminish their importance, the stranger will instinctively halt. On the foreground, a little below the most favourable station, a rude foot-bridge is thrown over the bed of the noisy brook foaming by the way-side. Russet and craggy

hills, of bold and varied outline, surround the level valley, which is besprinkled with grey rocks plumed with birch trees. A few homesteads are interspersed, in some places peeping out from among the rocks like hermitages, whose site has been chosen for the benefit of sunshine as well as shelter; in other instances, the dwelling-house, barn, and byre, compose together a cruciform structure, which, with its embowering trees, and the ivy clothing part of the walls and roof like a fleece, call to mind the remains of an ancient abbey. Time, in most cases, and nature everywhere, have given a sanctity to the humble works of man, that are scattered over this peaceful retirement. Hence a harmony of tone and colour, a consummation and perfection of beauty, which would have been marred had aim or purpose interfered with the course of convenience, utility, or necessity. This unvisited region stands in no need of the veil of twilight to soften or disguise its features. As it glistens in the morning sunshine, it would fill the spectator's heart with gladness. Looking from our chosen station, he would feel an impatience to rove among its pathways, to be greeted by the milkmaid, to wander from house to house, exchanging "good-morrows" as he passed the open doors; but, at evening, when the sun is set, and a pearly light gleams from the western quarter of the sky, with an answering light from the smooth surface of the meadows; when the trees are dusky, but each kind still distinguishable; when the cool air has condensed the blue smoke rising from the cottage chimneys; when the dark mossy stones seem to sleep in the bed of the foaming brook; *then*, he would be unwilling to move forward, not less from a reluctance to relinquish what he beholds, than from an apprehension of disturbing, by his approach, the quietness beneath him. Issuing from the plain of this valley, the brook descends in a rapid torrent passing by the churchyard of Seathwaite. The traveller is thus conducted at once into the midst of the wild and beautiful scenery which gave occasion to the Sonnets from the 14th to the 20th inclusive. From the point where the Seathwaite brook joins the Duddon, is a view upwards, into the pass through which the river makes its way into the plain of Donnerdale. The perpendicular rock on the right bears the ancient British name of *THE PEN*, the one opposite is called *WALLA-BARROW CRAE*, a name that occurs in other places to designate rocks of the same character. The chaotic aspect of the scene is well marked by the expression of a stranger, who strolled out while dinner was preparing, and at his return, being asked by his host, "What way he had been wandering?" replied, "As far as it is *finished*!"

The bed of the Duddon is here strewn with large fragments of rocks fallen from aloft; which, as Mr. Green truly says, "are happily adapted to the many-shaped waterfalls" (or rather water-breaks, for none of them are high), "displayed in the short space of half a mile." That there is some hazard in frequenting these desolate places, I myself have had proof; for one night an immense mass of rock fell upon the very spot where, with a friend, I had lingered the day before. "The concussion," says Mr. Green, speaking of the event (for he also, in the practice of his art, on that day sat exposed for a still longer time to the same peril), "was heard, not without alarm,

by the neighbouring shepherds." But to return to Seathwaite Churchyard: it contains the following inscription:—

"In memory of the Reverend Robert Walker, who died the 23th of June, 1802, in the 91st year of his age, and 67th of his ministry at Seathwaite."

"Also, of Anne Walker, his wife, who died the 28th of January, in the 84th year of her age."

In the parish register of Seathwaite Chapel, is this notice:

"Buried, June 23th, the Rev. Robert Walker. He was curate of Seathwaite sixty-six years. He was a man singular for his temperance, industry, and integrity."

This individual is the Pastor alluded to, in the eighteenth Sonnet, as a worthy compeer of the country parson of Chaucer, &c. In the Seventh Book of the Excursion, an abstract of his character is given, beginning—

"A Priest abides before whose life such doubts Fall to the ground;—"

and some account of his life, for it is worthy of being recorded, will not be out of place here.

#### MEMOIR OF THE REV. ROBERT WALKER.

In the year 1709, Robert Walker was born at Under-crag, in Seathwaite; he was the youngest of twelve children. His eldest brother, who inherited the small family estate, died at Under-crag, aged ninety-four, being twenty-four years older than the subject of this Memoir, who was born of the same mother. Robert was a sickly infant; and, through his boyhood and youth, continuing to be of delicate frame and tender health, it was deemed best, according to the country phrase, to *breed him a scholar*; for it was not likely that he would be able to earn a livelihood by bodily labour. At that period few of these dales were furnished with school-houses; the children being taught to read and write in the chapel; and in the same consecrated building, where he officiated for so many years both as preacher and schoolmaster, he himself received the rudiments of his education. In his youth he became schoolmaster at Loweswater; not being called upon, probably, in that situation to teach more than reading, writing, and arithmetic. But, by the assistance of a "Gentleman," in the neighbourhood, he acquired, at leisure hours, a knowledge of the classics, and became qualified for taking holy orders. Upon his ordination, he had the offer of two curacies: the one, Torver, in the vale of Conistone;—the other, Seathwaite, in his native vale. The value of each was the same, viz. five pounds *per annum*; but the cure of Seathwaite having a cottage attached to it, as he wished to marry, he chose it in preference. The young person on whom his affections were fixed, though in the condition of a domestic servant, had given promise, by her serious and modest deportment, and by her virtuous dispositions, that she was worthy to become the helpmate of a man entering upon a plan of life such as he had marked out for himself. By her frugality she had stored up a small sum of money, with which they began housekeeping. In 1735 or 1736, he entered upon his curacy; and, nineteen years afterwards, his situation is thus described, in some letters to be found in the Annual Register for 1760, from which the following is extracted:

To Mr. —.

"CONISTON, July 26, 1754.

"Sir,

"I was the other day upon a party of pleasure, about five or six miles from this place, where I met with a very striking object, and of a nature not very common. Going into a clergyman's house (of whom I had frequently heard), I found him sitting at the head of a long square table, such as is commonly used in this country by the lower class of people, dressed in a coarse blue frock, trimmed with black horn buttons; a checked shirt, a leathern strap about his neck for a stock, a coarse apron, and a pair of great wooden-soled shoes plated with iron to preserve them (what we call clogs in these parts), with a child upon his knee, eating his breakfast; his wife, and the remainder of his children, were some of them employed in waiting upon each other, the rest in carding and spinning wool, at which trade he is a great proficient; and moreover, when it is made ready for sale, will lay it, by sixteen or thirty-two pounds' weight, upon his back, and on foot, seven or eight miles, will carry it to the market, even in the depth of winter. I was not much surprised at all this, as you may possibly be, having heard a great deal of it related before. But I must confess myself astonished with the alacrity and the good humour that appeared both in the clergyman and his wife, and more so at the sense and ingenuity of the clergyman himself."

Then follows a letter from another person, dated 1755, from which an extract shall be given.

"By his frugality and good management, he keeps the wolf from the door, as we say; and if he advances a little in the world, it is owing more to his own care, than to anything else he has to rely upon. I don't find his inclination is running after further preferment. He is settled among the people, that are happy among themselves; and lives in the greatest unanimity and friendship with them; and, I believe, the minister and people are exceedingly satisfied with each other; and indeed how should they be dissatisfied when they have a person of so much worth and probity for their pastor? A man who, for his candour and meekness, his sober, chaste, and virtuous conversation, his soundness in principle and practice, is an ornament to his profession, and an honour to the country he is in; and bear with me if I say, the plainness of his dress, the sanctity of his manners, the simplicity of his doctrine, and the vehemence of his expression, have a sort of resemblance to the pure practice of primitive Christianity."

We will now give his own account of himself, to be found in the same place.

#### FROM THE REV. ROBERT WALKER.

"Sir,—Yours of the 26th instant was communicated to me by Mr. C—, and I should have returned an immediate answer, but the hand of Providence, then laying heavy upon an amiable pledge of conjugal endearment, hath since taken from me a promising girl, which the disconsolate mother too pensively laments the loss of; though we have yet eight living, all healthful, hopeful children, whose names and ages are as follows:—Zaccheus, aged almost eighteen years; Elizabeth, sixteen years and ten months; Mary, fifteen;

Moses, thirteen years and three months; Sarah, ten years and three months; Mabel, eight years and three months; William Tyson, three years and eight months; and Anne Esther, one year and three months; besides Anne, who died two years and six months ago, and was then aged between nine and ten; and Eleanor, who died the 23rd inst., January, aged six years and ten months. Zaccheus, the eldest child, is now learning the trade of tanner, and has two years and a half of his apprenticeship to serve. The annual income of my chapel at present, as near as I can compute it, may amount to about £17, of which is paid in cash, viz. £5 from the bounty of Queen Anne, and £5 from W. P. Esq., of P—, out of the annual rents, he being lord of the manor, and £3 from the several inhabitants of L—, settled upon the tenements as a rent-charge; the house and gardens I value at £4 yearly, and not worth more; and I believe the surplice fees and voluntary contributions, one year with another, may be worth £3; but as the inhabitants are few in number, and the fees very low, this last-mentioned sum consists merely in free-will offerings.

"I am situated greatly to my satisfaction with regard to the conduct and behaviour of my auditory, who not only live in the happy ignorance of the follies and vices of the age, but in mutual peace and goodwill with one another, and are seemingly (I hope really too) sincere Christians, and sound members of the established church, not one dissenter of any denomination being amongst them all. I got to the value of £30 for my wife's fortune, but had no real estate of my own, being the youngest son of twelve children, born of obscure parents; and, though my income has been but small, and my family large, yet, by a providential blessing upon my own diligent endeavours, the kindness of friends, and a cheap country to live in, we have always had the necessities of life. By what I have written (which is a true and exact account, to the best of my knowledge,) I hope you will not think your favour to me, out of the late worthy Dr. Stratford's effects, quite misbestowed, for which I must ever gratefully own myself,

"Sir,

"Your much obliged and most obedient humble Servant,

"R. W., Curate of S—.

"To Mr. C., of Lancaster."

About the time when this letter was written, the Bishop of Chester recommended the scheme of joining the curacy of Ulpha to the contiguous one of Seathwaite, and the nomination was offered to Mr. Walker; but an unexpected difficulty arising, Mr. W., in a letter to the Bishop, (a copy of which, in his own beautiful handwriting, now lies before me,) thus expresses himself. "If he," meaning the person in whom the difficulty originated, "had suggested any such objection before, I should utterly have declined any attempt to the curacy of Ulpha: indeed, I was always apprehensive it might be disagreeable to my auditory at Seathwaite, as they have been always accustomed to double duty, and the inhabitants of Ulpha despair of being able to support a schoolmaster who is not curate there also; which suppressed all thoughts in me of serving them both." And in a second letter to the Bishop he writes:—

"MY LORD,—I have the favour of yours of the 1st instant, and am exceedingly obliged on account of the Ulpha affair: if that curacy should lapse into your Lordship's hands, I would beg leave rather to decline than embrace it; for the chapels of Seathwaite and Ulpha, annexed together, would be apt to cause a general discontent among the inhabitants of both places; by either thinking themselves slighted, being only served alternately, or neglected in the duty, or attributing it to covetousness in me; all which occasions of murmuring I would willingly avoid." And in concluding his former letter, he expresses a similar sentiment upon the same occasion, "desiring, if it be possible, however, as much as in me lieth, to live peaceably with all men."

The year following, the curacy of Seathwaite was again augmented; and, to effect this augmentation, fifty pounds had been advanced by himself; and, in 1760, lands were purchased with eight hundred pounds. Scanty as was his income, the frequent offer of much better benefices could not tempt Mr. W. to quit a situation where he had been so long happy, with a consciousness of being useful. Among his papers I find the following copy of a letter, dated 1775, twenty years after his refusal of the curacy of Ulpha, which will show what exertions had been made for one of his sons.

"MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,

"Our remote situation here makes it difficult to get the necessary information for transacting business regularly; such is the reason of my giving your Grace the present trouble.

"The bearer (my son) is desirous of offering himself candidate for deacon's orders at your Grace's ensuing ordination; the first, on the 25th instant, so that his papers could not be transmitted in due time. As he is now fully at age, and I have afforded him education to the utmost of my ability, it would give me great satisfaction (if your Grace would take him, and find him qualified) to have him ordained. His constitution has been tender for some years; he entered the college of Dublin, but his health would not permit him to continue there, or I would have supported him much longer. He has been with me at home above a year, in which time he has gained great strength of body, sufficient, I hope, to enable him for performing the function. Divine Providence, assisted by liberal benefactors, has blest my endeavours, from a small income, to rear a numerous family; and as my time of life renders me now unfit for much future expectancy from this world, I should be glad to see my son settled in a promising way to acquire an honest livelihood for himself. His behaviour, so far in life, has been irreproachable; and I hope he will not degenerate, in principles or practice, from the precepts and pattern of an indulgent parent. Your Grace's favourable reception of this, from a distant corner of the diocese, and an obscure hand, will excite filial gratitude, and a due use shall be made of the obligation vouchsafed there by to

"Your Grace's very dutiful and most obedient.

"Son and Servant,

"ROBERT WALKER."

The same man, who was thus liberal in the education of his numerous family, was even munificent in hospitality as a parish priest. Every Sunday, were served, upon the long table, at which he has been described sitting with a child upon his knee, messes of broth, for the refreshment of those of his congregation who came from a distance, and usually took their seats as parts of his own household. It seems scarcely possible that this custom could have commenced before the augmentation of his cure; and what would to many have been a high price of self-denial, was paid, by the pastor and his family, for this gratification; as the treat could only be provided by dressing at one time the whole, perhaps, of their weekly allowance of fresh animal food; consequently, for a succession of days, the table was covered with cold victuals only. His generosity in old age may be still further illustrated by a little circumstance relating to an orphan grandson, then ten years of age, which I find in a copy of a letter to one of his sons; he requests that half a guinea may be left for "little Robert's pocket money," who was then at school: intrusting it to the care of a lady, who, as he says, "may sometimes frustrate his squandering it away foolishly," and promising to send him an equal allowance annually for the same purpose. The conclusion of the same letter is so characteristic, that I cannot forbear to transcribe it. "We," meaning his wife and himself, "are in our wonted state of health, allowing for the hasty strides of old age knocking daily at our door, and threateningly telling us, we are not only mortal, but must expect ere long to take our leave of our ancient cottage, and lie down in our last dormitory. Pray pardon my neglect to answer yours: let us hear sooner from you, to augment the mirth of the Christmas holidays. Wishing you all the pleasures of the approaching season, I am, dear Son, with lasting sincerity, yours affectionately,

"ROBERT WALKER."

He loved old customs and old usages, and in some instances stuck to them to his own loss; for, having had a sum of money lodged in the hands of a neighbouring tradesman, when long course of time had raised the rate of interest, and more was offered, he refused to accept it; an act not difficult to one, who, while he was drawing seventeen pounds a year from his curacy, declined, as we have seen, to add the profits of another small benefice to his own, lest he should be suspected of cupidity.—From this vice he was utterly free; he made no charge for teaching school; such as could afford to pay, gave him what they pleased. When very young, having kept a diary of his expenses, however trifling, the large amount at the end of the year surprised him; and from that time the rule of his life was to be economical, not avaricious. At his decease he left behind him no less a sum than £2,000; and such a sense of his various excellences was prevalent in the country, that the epithet of WONDERFUL is to this day attached to his name.

There is in the above sketch something so extraordinary as to require further explanatory details.—And to begin with his industry: eight hours in each day, during five days in the week, and half of Saturday, except when the labours of husbandry were urgent, he was occupied in teach-

ing. His seat was within the rails of the altar; the communion table was his desk; and, like Shenstone's schoolmistress, the master employed himself at the spinning-wheel, while the children were repeating their lessons by his side. Every evening after school hours, if not more profitably engaged, he continued the same kind of labour, exchanging, for the benefit of exercise, the small wheel at which he had sat, for the large one on which wool is spun, the spinner stepping to and fro. Thus, was the wheel constantly in readiness to prevent the waste of a moment's time. Nor was his industry with the pen, when occasion called for it, less eager. Intrusted with extensive management of public and private affairs, he acted, in his rustic neighbourhood, as scrivener, writing out petitions, deeds of conveyance, wills, covenants, &c., with pecuniary gain to himself, and to the great benefit of his employers. These labours (at all times considerable) at one period of the year, viz. between Christmas and Candlemas, when money transactions are settled in this country, were often so intense, that he passed great part of the night, and sometimes whole nights, at his desk. His garden also was tilled by his own hand; he had a right of pasturage upon the mountains for a few sheep and a couple of cows, which required his attendance; with this pastoral occupation he joined the labours of husbandry upon a small scale, renting two or three acres in addition to his own less than one acre of glebe; and the humblest drudgery which the cultivation of these fields required was performed by himself.

He also assisted his neighbours in haymaking and shearing their flocks, and in the performance of this latter service he was eminently dexterous. They, in their turn, complimented him with the present of a haycock, or a fleece; less as a recompense for this particular service than as a general acknowledgment. The Sabbath was in a strict sense kept holy; the Sunday evenings being devoted to reading the Scripture and family prayer. The principal festivals appointed by the Church were also duly observed; but through every other day in the week, through every week in the year he was incessantly occupied in work of hand or mind; not allowing a moment for recreation, except upon a Saturday afternoon, when he indulged himself with a Newspaper, or sometimes with a Magazine. The frugality and temperance established in his house were as admirable as the industry. Nothing to which the name of luxury could be given was there known; in the latter part of his life, indeed, when tea had been brought into almost general use, it was provided for visitors, and for such of his own family as returned occasionally to his roof, and had been accustomed to this refreshment elsewhere; but neither he nor his wife ever partook of it. The raiment worn by his family was comely and decent, but as simple as their diet; the homespun materials were made up into apparel by their own hands. At the time of the decease of this thrifty pair, their cottage contained a large store of webs of woollen and linen cloth, woven from thread of their own spinning. And it is remarkable that the pew in the chapel in which the family used to sit, remains nearly lined with woollen cloth spun by the pastor's own hands. It is the only pew in the chapel so distinguished; and I know of no other instance

of his conformity to the delicate accommodations of modern times. The fuel of the house, like that of their neighbours, consisted of peat, procured from the mosses by their own labour. The lights by which, in the winter evenings, their work was performed, were of their own manufacture, such as still continue to be used in these places; they are made of the pith of rushes dipped in any unctuous substance that the house affords. *White* candles, as tallow candles are here called, were reserved to honour the Christmas festivals, and were perhaps produced upon no other occasions. Once a month, during the proper season, a sheep was drawn from their small mountain flock, and killed for the use of the family; and a cow, towards the close of the year, was salted and dried for winter provision: the hide was tanned to furnish them with shoes. —By these various resources, this venerable clergyman reared a numerous family, not only preserving them, as he affectingly says, "from wanting the necessaries of life;" but affording them an unstinted education, and the means of raising themselves in society. In this they were eminently assisted by the effects of their father's example, his precepts, and injunctions: he was aware that truth-speaking, as a moral virtue, is best secured by inculcating attention to accuracy of report even on trivial occasions; and so rigid were the rules of honesty by which he endeavoured to bring up his family, that if one of them had chanced to find in the lanes or fields anything of the least use or value without being able to ascertain to whom it belonged, he always insisted upon the child's carrying it back to the place from which it had been brought.

No one it might be thought could, as has been described, convert his body into a machine, as it were, of industry for the humblest uses, and keep his thoughts so frequently bent upon secular concerns, without grievous injury to the more precious parts of his nature. How could the powers of intellect thrive, or its graces be displayed, in the midst of circumstances apparently so unfavourable, and where, to the direct cultivation of the mind, so small a portion of time was allotted? But, in this extraordinary man, things in their nature adverse were reconciled. His conversation was remarkable, not only for being chaste and pure, but for the degree in which it was fervent and eloquent; his written style was correct, simple, and animated. Nor did his *affections* suffer more than his intellect; he was tenderly alive to all the duties of his pastoral office: the poor and needy "he never sent empty away,"—the stranger was fed and refreshed in passing that unfrequented vale—the sick were visited; and the feelings of humanity found further exercise among the distresses and embarrassments in the worldly estate of his neighbours, with which his talents for business made him acquainted; and the disinterestedness, impartiality, and uprightness which he maintained in the management of all affairs confided to him, were virtues seldom separated in his own conscience from religious obligation. Nor could such conduct fail to remind those who witnessed it of a spirit nobler than law or custom: they felt convictions which, but for such intercourse, could not have been afforded, that, as in the practice of their pastor, there was no guile, so in his faith there was

nothing hollow; and we are warranted in believing, that upon these occasions, selfishness, obstinacy, and discord would often give way before the breathings of his good-will and saintly integrity. It may be presumed also—while his humble congregation were listening to the moral precepts which he delivered from the pulpit, and to the Christian exhortations that they should love their neighbours as themselves, and do as they would be done unto—that peculiar efficacy was given to the preacher's labours by recollections in the minds of his congregation, that they were called upon to do no more than his own actions were daily setting before their eyes.

The afternoon service in the chapel was less numerously attended than that of the morning, but by a more serious auditory; the lesson from the New Testament, on those occasions, was accompanied by Burkitt's Commentaries. These lessons he read with impassioned emphasis, frequently drawing tears from his hearers, and leaving a lasting impression upon their minds. His devotional feelings and the powers of his own mind were further exercised, along with those of his family, in perusing the Scriptures: not only on the Sunday evenings, but on every other evening, while the rest of the household were at work, some one of the children, and in her turn the servant, for the sake of practice in reading, or for instruction, read the Bible aloud; and in this manner the whole was repeatedly gone through. That no common importance was attached to the observance of religious ordinances by his family, appears from the following memorandum by one of his descendants, which I am tempted to insert at length, as it is characteristic, and somewhat curious. "There is a small chapel in the county palatine of Lancaster, where a certain clergyman has regularly officiated above sixty years, and a few months ago administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the same, to a decent number of devout communicants. After the clergyman had received himself, the first company out of the assembly who approached the altar, and kneeled down to be partakers of the sacred elements, consisted of the parson's wife; to whom he had been married upwards of sixty years; one son and his wife; four daughters, each with her husband; whose ages, all added together, amounted to above 714 years. The several and respective distances from the place of each of their abodes, to the chapel where they all communicated, will measure more than 1,000 English miles. Though the narration will appear surprising, it is without doubt a fact that the same persons, exactly four years before, met at the same place, and all joined in performance of the same venerable duty."

He was indeed most zealously attached to the doctrine and frame of the Established Church. We have seen him congratulating himself that he had no dissenters in his cure of any denomination. Some allowance must be made for the state of opinion when his first religious impressions were received, before the reader will acquit him of bigotry, when I mention, that at the time of the augmentation of the cure, he refused to invest part of the money in the purchase of an estate offered to him upon advantageous terms, because the proprietor was a Quaker;—whether

from scrupulous apprehension that a blessing would not attend a contract framed for the benefit of the church between persons not in religious sympathy with each other; or, as a seeker of peace, he was afraid of the uncomplimentary disposition which at one time was too frequently conspicuous in that sect. Of this an instance had fallen under his own notice; for, while he taught school at Loweswater, certain persons of that denomination had refused to pay annual interest due under the title of Church-stock<sup>1</sup>; a great hardship upon the incumbent, for the curacy of Loweswater was then scarcely less poor than that of Seathwaite. To what degree this prejudice of his was blameable need not be determined;—certain it is, that he was not only desirous, as he himself says, to live in peace, but in love, with all men. He was placable, and charitable in his judgments; and, however correct in conduct and rigorous to himself, he was ever ready to forgive the trespasses of others, and to soften the censure that was cast upon their frailties.—It would be unpardonable to omit that, in the maintenance of his virtues, he received due support from the partner of his long life. She was equally strict, in attending to her share of their joint cares, nor less diligent in her appropriate occupations. A person who had been some time their servant in the latter part of their lives, concluded the panegyric of her mistress by saying to me, "She was no less excellent than her husband; she was good to the poor; she was good to everything!" He survived for a short time this virtuous companion. When she died, he ordered that her body should be borne to the grave by three of her daughters and one grand-daughter; and, when the corpse was lifted from the threshold, he insisted upon lending his aid, and feeling about, for he was then almost blind, took hold of a napkin fixed to the coffin; and, as a bearer of the body, entered the chapel, a few steps from the lowly parsonage.

What a contrast does the life of this obscurely-seated, and, in point of worldly wealth, poorly-repaid Churchman, present to that of a Cardinal Wolsey!

"O 'tis a burthen, Cromwell, 'tis a burthen  
Too heavy for a man who hopes for heaven!"

We have been dwelling upon images of peace in the moral world, that have brought us again to the quiet enclosure of consecrated ground, in which this venerable pair lie interred. The sounding brook, that rolls close by the churchyard, without disturbing feeling or meditation, is now unfortunately laid bare; but not long ago it participated, with the chapel, the shade of some stately ash-trees, which will not spring again. While the spectator from this spot is looking round upon the girdle of stony mountains that encompasses the vale,—masses of rock, out of which monuments for all men that ever existed might have been hewn—it would surprise him to be told, as with truth he might be, that the plain blue slab dedicated to the memory of this aged pair is a production of a quarry in North Wales. It was sent as a mark of respect

by one of their descendants from the vale of Festiniog, a region almost as beautiful as that in which it now lies!

Upon the Seathwaite Brook, at a small distance from the parsonage, has been erected a mill for spinning yarn; it is a mean and disagreeable object, though not unimportant to the spectator, as calling to mind the momentous changes wrought by such inventions in the frame of society—changes which have proved especially unfavourable to those mountain solitudes. So much had been effected by those new powers, before the subject of the preceding biographical sketch closed his life, that their operation could not escape his notice, and doubtless excited touching reflections upon the comparatively insignificant results of his own manual industry. But Robert Walker was not a man of times and circumstances: had he lived at a later period, the principle of duty would have produced application as unremitting; the same energy of character would have been displayed, though in many instances with widely-different effects.

With pleasure I annex, as illustrative and confirmatory of the above account, extracts from a paper in the "Christian Remembrancer," October, 1819: it bears an assumed signature, but is known to be the work of the Rev. Robert Bamford, vicar of Bishopton, in the county of Durham; a great-grandson of Mr. Walker, whose worth it commemorates, by a record not the less valuable for being written in very early youth.

"His house was a nursery of virtue. All the inmates were industrious, and cleanly, and happy. Sobriety, neatness, quietness, characterised the whole family. No rollings, no idleness, no indulgence of passion were permitted. Every child, however young, had its appointed engagements; every hand was busy. Knitting, spinning, reading, writing, mending clothes, making shoes, were by the different children constantly performing. The father himself sitting amongst them, and guiding their thoughts, was engaged in the same occupations."

"He sat up late, and rose early; when the family were at rest, he retired to a little room which he had built on the roof of his house. He had slated it, and fitted it up with shelves for his books, his stock of cloth, wearing apparel, and his utensils. There many a cold winter's night, without fire, while the roof was glazed with ice, did he remain reading or writing till the day dawned. He taught the children in the chapel, for there was no school-house. Yet in that cold, damp place he never had a fire. He used to send the children in parties either to his own fire at home, or make them run up the mountain side."

"It may be further mentioned, that he was a passionate admirer of Nature; she was his mother, and he was a dutiful child. While engaged on the mountains, it was his greatest pleasure to view the rising sun; and in tranquil evenings, as it slid behind the hills, he blessed its departure. He was skilled in fossils and plants; a constant observer of the stars and winds: the atmosphere was his delight. He made many experiments on its nature and properties. In summer he used to gather a multitude of flies and insects, and, by his entertaining description, amuse and instruct his chil-

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Walker's charity being of that kind which "seeketh not her own," he would rather forego his rights than distrust for dues which the parties liable refused, as a point of conscience, to pay.

dren. They shared all his daily employments, and derived many sentiments of love and benevolence from his observations on the works and productions of nature. Whether they were following him in the field, or surrounding him in school, he took every opportunity of storing their minds with useful information.—Nor was the circle of his influence confined to Seathwaite. Many a distant mother has told her child of Mr. Walker, and begged him to be as good a man.

"Once, when I was very young, I had the pleasure of seeing and hearing that venerable old man in his 90th year, and even then, the calmness, the force, the perspicuity of his sermon, sanctified and adorned by the wisdom of grey hairs, and the authority of virtue, had such an effect upon my mind, that I never see a hoary-headed clergyman, without thinking of Mr. Walker. . . . He allowed no dissenter or methodist to interfere in the instruction of the souls committed to his cure: and so successful were his exertions, that he had not one dissenter of any denomination whatever in the whole parish. Though he avoided all religious controversies, yet when age had silvered his head, and virtuous piety had secured to his appearance reverence and silent honour, no one, however determined in his hatred of apostolic descent, could have listened to his discourse on ecclesiastical history and ancient times, without thinking that one of the beloved apostles had returned to mortality, and in that vale of peace had come to exemplify the beauty of holiness in the life and character of Mr. Walker.

"Until the sickness of his wife, a few months previous to her death, his health and spirits and faculties were unimpaired. But this misfortune gave him such a shock, that his constitution gradually decayed. His senses, except sight, still preserved their powers. He never preached with steadiness after his wife's death. His voice faltered: he always looked at the seat she had used. He could not pass her tomb without tears. He became, when alone, sad and melancholy, though still among his friends kind and good-humoured. He went to bed about twelve o'clock the night before his death. As his custom was, he went, tottering and leaning upon his daughter's arm, to examine the heavens, and meditate a few moments in the open air. 'How clear the moon shines to-night!' He said these words, sighed, and laid down. At six next morning he was found a corpse. Many a tear, and many a heavy heart, and many a grateful blessing followed him to the grave."

Having mentioned in this narrative the vale of Loweswater as a place where Mr. Walker taught school I will add a few memoranda from its parish register, respecting a person apparently of desires as moderate, with whom he must have been intimate during his residence there.

"Let him that would, ascend the tottering seat  
Of courtly grandeur, and become as great  
As: are his mounting wishes: but for me,  
Let sweet repose and rest my portion be.

"HENRY FOREST, Curate."

"Honour, the idol which the most adore,  
Receives no homage from my knee;  
Content in privacy I value more  
Than all uneasy dignity."

"Henry Forest came to Loweswater, 1708, being twenty-five years of age."

"This curacy was twice augmented by Queen Anne's Bounty. The first payment, with great difficulty, was paid to Mr. John Curwen of London, on the 24th of May, 1724, deposited by me, Henry Forest, Curate of Loweswater. Ye said 9th of May, ye said Mr. Curwen went to the office, and saw my name registered there, &c. This, by the Providence of God, came by lot to this poor place.

"Hæc testor H. FOREST."

In another place he records, that the sycamore trees were planted in the churchyard in 1710.

He died in 1741, having been curate thirty-four years. It is not improbable that H. Forest was the gentleman who assisted Robert Walker in his classical studies at Loweswater.

To this parish register is prefixed a motto, of which the following verses are a part:—

"Invigilate viri, tacito nam tempora gressu  
Diffugiunt, nulloque sono convertitur annus;  
Utendum est ætate, cito pede præterit sætas."—W.

"We feel that we are greater than we know"  
(page 384, last line).

"And feel that I am happier than I know."  
MILTON.

The allusion to the Greek poet will be obvious to the classical reader.—W.

The poet in question is Moschus; the passage of which W. is thinking is from the *Epitaphium Bionis*, ll. 106-111.

The seventh line of the Sonnet is a reminiscence of the following line of Moschus:—

ἄμμες δ', οἱ μεγάλοι καὶ καρτεροὶ ἢ σοφοὶ ἄνδρες.  
—Ed.

#### HIGHLAND HUT (page 390).

This Sonnet describes the exterior of a Highland hut, as often seen under morning or evening sunshine. To the authoress of the "Address to the Wind," and other poems, in these volumes, who was my fellow-traveller in this tour, I am indebted for the following extract from her journal, which accurately describes, under particular circumstances, the beautiful appearance of the interior of one of these rude habitations.

"On our return from the Trossachs the evening began to darken, and it rained so heavily that we were completely wet before we had come two miles, and it was dark when we landed with our boatman, at his hut upon the banks of Loch Katrine. I was faint from cold: the good woman had provided, according to her promise, a better fire than we had found in the morning; and, indeed, when I sat down in the chimney-corner of her smoky biggin, I thought I had never felt more comfortable in my life: a pan of coffee was boiling for us, and, having put our clothes in the way of drying, we all sat down thankful for a shelter. We could not prevail upon our boatman, the master of the house, to draw near the fire, though he was cold and wet, or to suffer his wife to get him dry clothes till she had served us, which she did most willingly, though not very expeditiously.

"A Cumberland man of the same rank would not have had such a notion of what was fit and right

in his own house, or, if he had, one would have accused him of servility; but in the Highlander it only seemed like politeness (however erroneous and painful to us), naturally growing out of the dependence of the inferiors of the clan upon their laird; he did not, however, refuse to let his wife bring out the whisky bottle for his refreshment, at our request. 'She keeps a dram,' as the phrase is: indeed, I believe there is scarcely a lonely house by the wayside, in Scotland, where travellers may not be accommodated with a dram. We asked for sugar, butter, barley-bread, and milk; and, with a smile and a stare more of kindness than wonder, she replied, 'Ye'll get that,' bringing each article separately. We caroused our cups of coffee, laughing like children at the strange atmosphere in which we were: the smoke came in gusts, and spread along the walls; and above our heads in the chimney (where the hens were roosting) it appeared like clouds in the sky. We laughed and laughed again, in spite of the smarting of our eyes, yet had a quieter pleasure in observing the beauty of the beams and rafters gleaming between the clouds of smoke: they had been crusted over, and varnished by many winters, till, where the twilight fell upon them, they had become as glossy as black rocks, on a sunny day, cased in ice. When we had eaten our supper we sat about half an hour, and I think I never felt so deeply the blessing of a hospitable welcome and a warm fire. The man of the house repeated from time to time that we should often tell of this night when we got to our homes, and interposed praises of his own lake, which he had more than once, when we were returning in the boat, ventured to say was 'bonnier than Loch Lomond.' Our companion from the Trosachs, who, it appeared, was an Edinburgh drawing-master going, during the vacation, on a pedestrian tour to John o'Groat's house, was to sleep in the barn with my fellow-travellers, where the man said he had plenty of dry hay. I do not believe that the hay of the Highlands is ever very dry, but this year it had a better chance than usual: wet or dry, however, the next morning they said they had slept comfortably. When I went to bed, the mistress, desiring me to 'go ben,' attended me with a candle, and assured me that the bed was dry, though not 'sic as I had been used to.' It was of chaff: there were two others in the room, a cupboard and two chests, upon one of which stood milk in wooden vessels, covered over. The walls of the house were of stone unplastered: it consisted of three apartments, the cowhouse at one end, the kitchen or house in the middle, and the spence at the other end; the rooms were divided, not up to the rigging, but only to the beginning of the roof, so that there was a free passage for light and smoke from one end of the house to the other. I went to bed some time before the rest of the family; the door was shut between us, and they had a bright fire, which I could not see, but the light it sent up amongst the varnished rafters and beams, which crossed each other in almost as intricate and fantastic a manner as I have seen the under-boughs of a large beech-tree withered by the depth of shade above, produced the most beautiful effect that can be conceived. It was like what I should suppose an underground cave or temple to be, with a dripping or moist roof, and the moonlight entering in upon it by some means or other; and

yet the colours were more like those of melted gems. I lay looking up till the light of the fire faded away, and the man and his wife and child had crept into their bed at the other end of the room: I did not sleep much, but passed a comfortable night; for my bed, though hard, was warm and clean: the unusualness of my situation prevented me from sleeping. I could hear the waves beat against the shore of the lake; a little rill close to the door made a much louder noise, and, when I sat up in my bed, I could see the lake through an open window-place at the bed's head. Add to this, it rained all night. I was less occupied by remembrance of the Trosachs, beautiful as they were, than the vision of the Highland hut, which I could not get out of my head; I thought of the Faery-land of Spenser, and what I had read in romance at other times; and then what a feast it would be for a London Pantomime-maker could he but transplant it to Drury-lane, with all its beautiful colours!—*M.S.—W.*

"Once on those steep I roamed" (page 392).

The following is from the same MS., and gives an account of the visit to Bothwell Castle here alluded to:—

"It was exceedingly delightful to enter thus unexpectedly upon such a beautiful region. The castle stands nobly, overlooking the Clyde. When we came up to it, I was hurt to see that flower-borders had taken place of the natural overgrowings of the ruin, the scattered stones, and wild plants. It is a large and grand pile of red freestone, harmonising perfectly with the rocks of the river, from which, no doubt, it has been hewn. When I was a little accustomed to the unnaturalness of a modern garden, I could not help admiring the excessive beauty and luxuriance of some of the plants, particularly the purple-flowered clematis, and a broad-leaved creeping plant without flowers, which scrambled up the castle wall, along with the ivy, and spread its vine-like branches so lavishly that it seemed to be in its natural situation, and one could not help thinking that, though not self-planted among the ruins of this country, it must somewhere have its native abode in such places. If Bothwell Castle had not been close to the Douglas mansion, we should have been disgusted with the possessor's miserable conception of *adorn*ing such a venerable ruin; but it is so very near to the house, that of necessity the pleasure-grounds must have extended beyond it, and perhaps the neatness of a shaven lawn and the complete desolation natural to a ruin might have made an unpleasant contrast; and, besides being within the precincts of the pleasure-grounds, and so very near to the dwelling of a noble family, it has forfeited, in some degree, its independent majesty, and becomes a tributary to the mansion: its solitude being interrupted, it has no longer the command over the mind in sending it back into past times, or excluding the ordinary feelings which we bear about us in daily life. We had then only to regret that the castle and the house were so near to each other; and it was impossible *not* to regret it; for the ruin presides in state over the river, far from city or town, as if it might have a peculiar privilege to preserve its memorials of past ages, and maintain its own character for centuries to come. We sat upon a bench under the high trees, and had beautiful views of the

different reaches of the river, above and below. On the opposite bank, which is finely wooded with elm and other trees, are the remains of a priory built upon a rock; and rock and ruin are so blended, that it is impossible to separate the one from the other. Nothing can be more beautiful than the little remnant of this holy place; elm-trees (for we were near enough to distinguish them by their branches) grow out of the walls, and overshadow a small, but very elegant window. It can scarcely be conceived what a grace the castle and priory impart to each other; and the river Clyde flows on, smooth and unruffled below, seeming to my thoughts more in harmony with the sober and stately images of former times, than if it had roared over a rocky channel, forcing its sound upon the ear. It blended gently with the warbling of the smaller birds, and the chattering of the larger ones, that had made their nests in the ruins. In this fortress the chief of the English nobility were confined after the battle of Bannockburn. If a man is to be a prisoner, he scarcely could have a more pleasant place to solace his captivity; but I thought that, for close confinement, I should prefer the banks of a lake, or the seaside. The greatest charm of a brook or river is in the liberty to pursue it through its windings; you can then take it in whatever mood you like; silent or noisy, sportive or quiet. The beauties of a brook or river must be sought, and the pleasure is in going in search of them; those of a lake or of the sea come to you of themselves. These rude warriors cared little, perhaps, about either; and yet, if one may judge from the writings of Chaucer, and from the old romances, more interesting passions were connected with natural objects in the days of chivalry than now; though going in search of scenery, as it is called, had not then been thought of. I had previously heard nothing of Bothwell Castle, at least nothing that I remembered; therefore, perhaps, my pleasure was greater, compared with what I received elsewhere, than others might feel."—*M.S. Journal*.—W.

#### HARTS-HORN TREE (page 393).

"In the time of the first Robert de Clifford, in the year 1333 or 1334, Edward Balliol king of Scotland came into Westmoreland, and stayed some time with the said Robert at his castles of Appleby, Brougham, and Pendragon. And during that time they ran a stag by a single greyhound out of Whitfell Park to Redkirk, in Scotland, and back again to this place; where, being both spent, the stag layed over the gales, but died on the other side; and the greyhound, attempting to leap, kill, and die on the contrary side. In memory of this fact the stag's horns were nailed upon a tree just by, and (the dog being named Hercules) this rhythm was made upon them:

"Hercules kill'd Hart a greese,  
And Hart a greese killed Hercules."

The tree to this day bears the name of Hart's-horn Tree. The horns in process of time were almost grown over by the growth of the tree, and another pair was put up in their place."—*Nicholson and Burns's History of Westmoreland and Cumberland*.

The tree has now disappeared, but I well remember its imposing appearance as it stood, in

a decayed state, by the side of the high road leading from Penrith to Appleby. This whole neighbourhood abounds in interesting traditions and vestiges of antiquity, viz. Julian's Bower; Brougham and Penrith Castles; Penrith Beacon, and the curious remains in Penrith Churchyard; Arthur's Round Table, and, close by, Maybrough; the excavation, called the Giant's Cave, on the banks of the Emont; Long Meg and her Daughters, near Eden, &c. &c.—W.

#### THE WHITE DOE OF RYLSTONE

(page 395).

The Poem of the White Doe of Rylstone is founded on a local tradition, and on the Ballad in Percy's Collection, entitled "The Rising of the North." The tradition is as follows:—"About this time" not long after the Dissolution, "a White Doe," say the aged people of the neighbourhood, "long continued to make a weekly pilgrimage from Rylstone over the fells of Bolton, and was constantly found in the Abbey Churchyard during divine service; after the close of which she returned home as regularly as the rest of the congregation."—*DR. WHITAKER'S History of the Deanery of Craven*.—Rylstone was the property and residence of the Nortons, distinguished in that ill-advised and unfortunate Insurrection; which led me to connect with this tradition the principal circumstances of their fate, as recorded in the Ballad.

"Bolton Priory," says Dr. Whitaker in his excellent book "The History and Antiquities of the Deanery of Craven," "stands upon a beautiful curvature of the Wharf, on a level sufficiently elevated to protect it from inundations, and low enough for every purpose of picturesque effect.

"Opposite to the East window of the Priory Church, the river washes the foot of a rock nearly perpendicular, and of the richest purple, where several of the mineral beds, which break out, instead of maintaining their usual inclination to the horizon, are twisted by some inconceivable process into undulating and spiral lines. To the South all is soft and delicious; the eye reposes upon a few rich pastures, a moderate reach of the river, sufficiently tranquil to form a mirror to the sun, and the bounding hills beyond, neither too near nor too lofty to exclude, even in winter, any portion of his rays.

"But, after all, the glories of Bolton are on the North. Whatever the most fastidious taste could require to constitute a perfect landscape, is not only found here, but in its proper place. In front, and immediately under the eye, is a smooth expanse of park-like enclosure, spotted with native elm, ash, &c., of the finest growth; on the right a skirting oak wood, with jutting points of grey rock; on the left a rising copse. Still forward are seen the aged groves of Bolton Park, the growth of centuries; and farther yet, the barren and rocky distances of Simon-seat and Barden Fell contrasted with the warmth, fertility, and luxuriant foliage of the valley below.

"About half a mile above Bolton the valley closes, and either side of the Wharf is overhung by solemn woods, from which huge perpendicular masses of grey rock jut out at intervals.

"This sequestered scene was almost inaccessible till of late, that ridings have been cut on both sides of the river, and the most interesting points laid open by judicious thinnings in the woods.

Here a tributary stream rushes from a waterfall, and bursts through a woody glen to mingle its waters with the Wharf; there the Wharf itself is nearly lost in a deep cleft in the rock, and next becomes a horned flood enclosing a woody island—sometimes it reposes for a moment, and then resumes its native character, lively, irregular, and impetuous.

"The cleft mentioned above is the tremendous Stram. This chasm, being incapable of receiving the winter floods, has formed on either side a broad strand of naked grit-stone full of rock-basins, or 'pots of the Linn,' which bear witness to the restless impetuosity of so many Northern torrents. But, if here Wharfe is lost to the eye, it amply repays another sense by its deep and solemn roar, like 'the Voice of the angry Spirit of the Waters,' heard far above and beneath, amidst the silence of the surrounding woods.

"The terminating object of the landscape is the remains of Barden Tower, interesting from their form and situation, and still more so from the recollections which they excite."—W.

*"Action is transitory"*—(page 396).

This and the five lines that follow were either read or recited by me, more than thirty years since, to the late Mr. Hazlitt, who quoted some expressions in them (imperfectly remembered) in a work of his published several years ago.—W.

*"From Bolton's old monastic Tower"* (p. 396, l. 1).

It is to be regretted that at the present day Bolton Abbey wants this ornament; but the Poem, according to the imagination of the Poet, is composed in Queen Elizabeth's time. "Formerly," says Dr. Whitaker, "over the Transept was a tower. This is proved not only from the mention of bells at the Dissolution, when they could have had no other place, but from the pointed roof of the choir, which must have terminated westward, in some building of superior height to the ridge."—W.

*"A Chapel, like a wild-bird's nest"* (p. 396, l. 27).

"The Nave of the Church having been reserved at the Dissolution, for the use of the Saxon Cure, is still a parochial Chapel; and, at this day, is as well kept as the neatest English cathedral."—W.

*"Who sate in the shade of the Prior's Oak!"*  
(page 396, l. 34).

"At a small distance from the great gateway stood the Prior's Oak, which was felled about the year 1720, and sold for £70. According to the price of wood at that time, it could scarcely have contained less than 1400 feet of timber."—W.

*"When Lady Ailiza mourned"* (p. 398, l. 226).

The detail of this tradition may be found in Dr. Whitaker's book, and in a Poem of this Collection, "The Force of Prayer."—W.

*"Pass, pass who will, yon chantry door;"*  
(page 398, l. 242).

"At the East end of the North aisle of Bolton Priory Church is a chantry belonging to Bethamesly Hull, and a vault, where, according to tradition, the Claphams" (who inherited this estate,

by the female line, from the Mauleverers) "were interred upright." John de Clapham, of whom this ferocious act is recorded, was a man of great note in his time: "he was a vehement partisan of the house of Lancaster, in whom the spirit of his chieftains, the Cliffords, seemed to survive."—W.

*"Who loved the Shepherd-lord to meet"*  
(page 398, l. 268).

In the second Volume of these Poems (Collective Edition of 1820.—1821) we find the entire, "Song at the Feast of Bretham Castle, upon the Restoration of Lord Clifford, the Successor to the Estates and Honours of his Ancestors." To that Poem is annexed an account of this personage, chiefly extracted from Burns and Nicholson's "History of Cumberland and Westmoreland." It gives me pleasure to add these further particulars concerning him, from Dr. Whitaker, who says he "retired to the solitude of Barlsey, where he seems to have enlarged the tower out of a common keeper's lodge, and where he found a retreat equally favourable to taste, to instruction, and to devotion. The narrow limits of his residence show that he had learned to despise the pomp of greatness, and that a small train of servants could suffice him, who had lived to the age of thirty a servant himself. I think this nobleman resided here almost entirely when in Yorkshire, for all his charters which I have seen are dated at Barden.

"His early habits, and the want of those artificial measures of time which even shepherds now possess, had given him a turn for observing the motions of the heavenly bodies; and, having purchased such an apparatus as could then be procured, he amused and informed himself by those pursuits, with the aid of the Canons of Bolton, some of whom are said to have been well versed in what was then known of the science.

"I suspect this nobleman to have been sometimes occupied in a more visionary pursuit, and probably in the same company.

"For, from the family evidences, I have met with two MSS. on the subject of Alchemy, which, from the character, spelling, &c., may almost certainly be referred to the reign of Henry the Seventh. If these were originally deposited with the MSS. of the Cliffords, it might have been for the use of this nobleman. If they were brought from Bolton at the Dissolution, they must have been the work of those Canons whom he almost exclusively conversed with.

"In these peaceful employments Lord Clifford spent the whole reign of Henry the Seventh, and the first years of his son. But in the year 1513, when almost sixty years old, he was appointed to a principal command over the army which fought at Flodden, and showed that the military genius of the family had neither been chilled in him by age, nor extinguished by habits of peace.

"He survived the battle of Flodden ten years, and died April 23rd, 1523, aged about 70. I shall endeavour to appropriate to him a tomb, vault, and chantry, in the choir of the church of Bolton, as I should be sorry to believe that he was deposited, when dead, at a distance from the place which in his lifetime he loved so well.

"By his last will he appointed his body to be interred at Shap, if he died in Westmoreland; or at Bolton, if he died in Yorkshire."

With respect to the Canons of Bolton, Dr. Whitaker shows from MSS. that not only alchemy but astronomy was a favourite pursuit with them.—W.

*"Now joy for you who from the towers  
Of Brancepeth look in doubt and fear,"*  
(page 402, ll. 504-5).

Brancepeth Castle stands near the river Were, a few miles from the city of Durham. It formerly belonged to the Nevilles, Earls of Westmoreland. See Dr. Percy's account.—W

*"Of mitred Thurston—what a Host  
He conquered!"* (page 405, ll. 814-15).

See the Historians for the account of this memorable battle, usually denominated the Battle of the Standard.—W.

*"In that other day of Neville's Cross?"*  
(page 405, l. 828).

"In the night before the battle of Durham was stricken and begun, the 17th day of October, anno 1346, there did appear to John Fosse, then Prior of the Abbey of Durham, a Vision, commanding him to take the holy Corporax-cloth, wherewith St. Cuthbert did cover the chalice when he used to say mass, and to put the same holy relique like to a banner-cloth upon the point of a spear, and the next morning to go and repair to a place on the west side of the city of Durham, called the Red Hills, where the Maid's Bower wont to be, and there to remain and abide till the end of the battle. To which vision the Prior obeying, and taking the same for a revelation of God's grace and mercy by the mediation of Holy St. Cuthbert, did accordingly the next morning, with the monks of the said abbey, repair to the said Red Hills, and there most devoutly humbling and prostrating themselves in prayer for the victory in the said battle: (a great multitude of the Scots running and pressing by them, with intention to have spoiled them, yet had no power to commit any violence under such holy persons, so occupied in prayer, being protected and defended by the mighty Providence of Almighty God, and by the mediation of Holy St. Cuthbert, and the presence of the holy relique). And, after many conflicts and warlike exploits there had and done between the English men and the King of Scots and his company, the said battle ended, and the victory was obtained, to the great overthrow and confusion of the Scots, their enemies: And then the said Prior and monks accompanied with Ralph Lord Nevil, and John Nevil his son, and the Lord Percy, and many other nobles of England, returned home and went to the abbey church, there joining in hearty prayer and thanksgiving to God and Holy St. Cuthbert for the victory achieved that day."

The battle was afterwards called the Battle of Neville's Cross from the following circumstance:—

"On the west side of the city of Durham, where two roads pass each other, a most notable, famous, and goodly cross of stonework was erected and set up to the honour of God for the victory there obtained in the field of battle, and known by the name of Nevil's Cross, and built at the sole cost of the Lord Ralph Nevil,

one of the most excellent and chief persons in the said battle." The Relique of St. Cuthbert afterwards became of great importance in military events. For soon after this battle, says the same author, "The prior caused a goodly and sumptuous banner to be made," (which is then described at great length), "and in the midst of the same banner-cloth was the said holy relique and corporax-cloth enclosed, &c., &c., and so sumptuously finished, and absolutely perfected, this banner was dedicated to Holy St. Cuthbert, of intent and purpose that for the future it should be carried to any battle, as occasion should serve; and was never carried and showed at any battle but by the especial grace of God Almighty, and the mediation of Holy St. Cuthbert; it brought home victory; which banner-cloth, after the dissolution of the abbey, fell into the possession of Dean Whittingham, whose wife, called KATHARINE, being a French woman, (as is most credibly reported by eye-witnesses,) did most injuriously burn the same in her fire, to the open contempt and disgrace of all ancient and goodly reliques."—Extracted from a book entitled, "Durham Cathedral, as it stood before the Dissolution of the Monastery." It appears, from the old metrical History, that the above-mentioned banner was carried by the Earl of Surrey to Flodden Field.—W.

*"An edifice of warlike frame  
Stands single—Norton Tower its name—"*  
(page 409, ll. 1167-8).

It is so called to this day, and is thus described by Dr. Whitaker:—"Rylstone Fell yet exhibits a monument of the old warfare between the Nortons and Cliffords. On a point of very high ground, commanding an immense prospect, and protected by two deep ravines, are the remains of a square tower, expressly said by Dodsworth to have been built by Richard Norton. The walls are of strong grout-work, about four feet thick. It seems to have been three stories high. Breaches have been industriously made in all the sides, almost to the ground, to render it untenable.

"But Norton Tower was probably a sort of pleasure-house in summer, as there are, adjoining to it, several large mounds, (two of them are pretty entire,) of which no other account can be given than that they were butts for large companies of archers.

"The place is savagely wild, and admirably adapted to the uses of a watch tower."—W.

*"despoil and desolation  
O'er Rylstone's fair domain have blown;"*  
(page 413, ll. 1568-9).

"After the attainder of Richard Norton his estates were forfeited to the crown, where they remained till the 2nd or 3rd of James; they were then granted to Francis Earl of Cumberland." From an accurate survey, made at that time, several particulars have been extracted by Dr. W. It appears that the "mansion-house was then in decay. Immediately adjoining is a close, called the Vivry, so called, undoubtedly, from the French Vivier, or modern Latin Vivarium; for there are near the house large remains of a pleasure-ground, such as were introduced in the earlier part of Elizabeth's time, with topiary

works, fishponds, and island, &c. The whole township was ranged by an hundred and thirty red deer, the property of the Lord, which, together with the wood, had, after the attainder of Mr. Norton, been committed to Sir Stephen Tame. The wood, it seems, had been a deer park, and the neighbourhood must have exhibited a forest-like and sylvan scene. In this survey among the old tenants, is mentioned one Richard Kitchen, butler to Mr. Norton, who rose in rebellion with his master, and was executed at Ripon."—W.

"In the deep fork of Amerdale;" (p. 415, l. 1707).

"At the extremity of the parish of Burnsal, the valley of Wharf forks off into two great branches, one of which retains the name of Wharfedale, to the source of the river; the other is usually called Littondale, but more anciently and properly, Amerdale. Dernbrook, which runs along an obscure valley from the N.W., is derived from a Teutonic word, signifying concealment."—DR. WHITAKER.—W.

"When the bells of Rylstone played  
The solemn music—'God us agbr!'"  
(page 415, ll. 1761-2).

On one of the bells of Rylstone Church, which seems coeval with the building of the tower, is this cypher, "Æ. 11." for John Norton, and the motto, "God us agbr."—W.

"The grassy rock-encircled Pound"  
(page 416, l. 1808).

Which is thus described by Dr. Whitaker:—"On the plain summit of the hill are the foundations of a strong wall stretching from the S.W. to the N.E. corner of the tower, and to the edge of a very deep glen. From this glen, a ditch, several hundred yards long, runs south to another deep and rugged ravine. On the N. and W. where the banks are very steep, no wall or mound is discoverable, paling being the only fence that could stand on such ground.

"From the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border it appears that such pounds for deer, sheep, &c. were far from being uncommon in the south of Scotland. The principle of them was something like that of a wire mouse-trap. On the declivity of a steep hill, the bottom and sides of which were fenced so as to be impassable, a wall was constructed nearly level with the surface on the outside, yet so high within, that without wings it was impossible to escape in the opposite direction. Care was probably taken that these enclosures should contain better feed than the neighbouring parks or forests; and whoever is acquainted with the habits of these sequacious animals, will easily conceive, that if the leader was once tempted to descend into the snare, a herd would follow."

I cannot conclude without recommending to the notice of all lovers of beautiful scenery, Bolton Abbey and its neighbourhood. This enchanting spot belongs to the Duke of Devonshire; and the superintendence of it has for some years been entrusted to the Rev. William Carr, who has most skillfully opened out its features; and, in whatever he has added has done justice to the place, by working with an invisible hand of art in the very spirit of nature.—W.

## ECCLESIASTICAL SONNETS (page 418).

During the month of December, 1820, I accompanied a much-beloved and honoured Friend in a walk through different parts of his estate, with a view to fix upon the site of a new Church which he intended to erect. It was one of the most beautiful mornings of a mild season,—our feelings were in harmony with the cherishing influences of the scene; and such being our purpose, we were naturally led to look back upon past events with wonder and gratitude, and on the future with hope. Not long afterwards, some of the Sonnets which will be found towards the close of this series were produced as a private memorial of that morning's occupation.

The Catholic Question, which was agitated in Parliament about that time, kept my thoughts in the same course; and it struck me that certain points in the Ecclesiastical History of our Country might advantageously be presented to view in verse. Accordingly, I took up the subject, and what I now offer to the reader was the result.

When this work was far advanced, I was agreeably surprised to find that my friend, Mr. Southey, had been engaged with similar views in writing a concise History of the Church in England. If our Productions, thus unintentionally coinciding, shall be found to illustrate each other, it will prove a high gratification to me, which I am sure my friend will participate.

W. WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT,  
January 24, 1822.

For the convenience of passing from one point of the subject to another without shocks of abruptness, this work has taken the shape of a series of Sonnets; but the Reader, it is to be hoped, will find that the pictures are often so closely connected as to have jointly the effect of passages of a poem in a form of stanza to which there is no objection but one that bears upon the Poet only—its difficulty.—W.

"Did Holy Paul," &c. (page 418).

Stillingfleet adduces many arguments in support of this opinion, but they are unavailing. The later part of this Sonnet refers to a favourite notion of Roman Catholic writers, that Joseph of Arimathea and his companions brought Christianity into Britain, and built a rude church at Glastonbury; alluded to hereafter, in a passage upon the dissolution of monasteries.—W.

"That Hill, whose flowery platform," &c.  
(page 420).

This hill at St. Alban's must have been an object of great interest to the imagination of the venerable Bede, who thus describes it, with a delicate feeling, delightful to meet with in that rude age, traces of which are frequent in his works:—"Varis herbarum floribus depictus imò usquequaque vestitus, in quo nihil repente arduum, nihil præceps, nihil abruptum, quem lateribus longè latèque deductum in modum æquoris natura complanat, dignum videlicet eum pro insitâ sibi specie venustatis jam olim reddens, qui beati martyris cruore diaretur."—W.

*"Nor wants the cause the panic-striking aid  
Of hallohujahs" (page 421).*

Alluding to the victory gained under Germanus.—See Bede.—W.

*"By men yet scarcely conscious of a care  
For other monuments than those of Earth;"*  
(page 421, xi., ll. 9, 10).

The last six lines of this Sonnet are chiefly from the prose of Daniel; and here I will state (though to the Readers whom this Poem will chiefly interest it is unnecessary) that my obligations to other prose writers are frequent,—obligations which, even if I had not a pleasure in courting, it would have been presumptuous to shun, in treating an historical subject. I must, however, particularise Fuller, to whom I am indebted in the Sonnet upon Wilcife and in other instances. And upon the acquittal of the Seven Bishops I have done little more than versify a lively description of that event in the MS. Memoirs of the first Lord Lonsdale.—W.

*Sonnet XII. (page 421).*

"Ethelforth reached the convent of Bangor, he perceived the Monks, twelve hundred in number, offering prayers for the success of their countrymen: 'if they are praying against us,' he exclaimed, 'they are fighting against us;' and he ordered them to be first attacked: they were destroyed; and, appalled by their fate, the courage of Broemadl wavered, and he fled from the field in dismay. Thus abandoned by their leader, his army soon gave way, and Ethelforth obtained a decisive conquest. Ancient Bangor itself soon fell into his hands, and was demolished; the noble monastery was levelled to the ground; its library, which is mentioned as a large one, the collection of ages, the repository of the most precious monuments of the ancient Britons, was consumed; half ruined walls, gates, and rubbish were all that remained of the magnificent edifice."—See Turner's valuable history of the Anglo-Saxons.

Talesin was present at the battle which preceded this desolation.

The account Bede gives of this remarkable event, suggests a most striking warning against National and Religious prejudices.—W.

*Sonnet XV. (page 422).*

The person of Paulinus is thus described by Bede, from the memory of an eye-witness:—"Longe stature, paululum incurvus, nigro capillo, facie macilentâ, naso adunco, pertenui, venerabilis simul et terribilis aspectu."—W.

*"Man's life is like a Sparrow," (page 422).*

See the original of this speech in Bede.—The Conversion of Edwin, as related by him, is highly interesting—and the breaking up of this Council accompanied with an event so striking and characteristic, that I am tempted to give it at length in a translation. "'Who,' exclaimed the King, when the Council was ended, 'shall first desecrate the altars and the temples?'" 'I,' answered the Chief Priest; 'for who more fit than myself, through the wisdom which the true God hath given me, to destroy, for the good example of

others, what in foolishness I worshipped?' Immediately, casting away vain superstition, he besought the King to grant him what the laws did not allow to a priest, arms and a coursar (equum emissarium); which mounting, and furnished with a sword and lance, he proceeded to destroy the Idols. The crowd, seeing this, thought him mad—he, however, halted not, but, approaching, he profaned the temple, casting against it the lance which he had held in his hand, and, exulting in acknowledgment of the worship of the true God, he ordered his companions to pull down the temple, with all its enclosures. The place is shown where those Idols formerly stood, not far from York, at the source of the river Derwent, and is at this day called Gormund Gaham, ubi pontifex ille, inspirante Deo vero, polluit ac destruxit eas, quas ipse sacraverat aras." The last expression is a pleasing proof that the venerable monk of Wearmouth was familiar with the poetry of Virgil.—W.

*"such the inviting voice  
Heard near fresh streams;" (page 423).*

The early propagators of Christianity were accustomed to preach near rivers, for the convenience of baptism.—W.

*Sonnet XIX. (page 423).*

Having spoken of the zeal, disinterestedness, and temperance of the clergy of those times, Bede thus proceeds:—"Unde et in magna erat veneratione tempore illo religionis habitus, ita ut ubicunque clericus aliquis, aut monachus adveniret, gaudenter ab omnibus tanquam Dei famulus exciperetur. Etiam si in itinere peregrinus invenireretur, accurrebant, et flexâ cervicæ, vel manu signati, vel ore illius se benedicti, gaudebant. Verbis quoque horum exhortatoris diligenter auditum prebebant." Lib. iii. cap. 26.—W.

*"The people work like congregated bees"*  
(page 424, xxiv., l. 2).

See, in Turner's History, vol. iii. p. 528, the account of the erection of Ramsey Monastery. Penances were removable by the performance of acts of charity and benevolence.—W.

*"pain narrows not his cares" (page 425).*  
Through the whole of his life, Alfred was subject to grievous maladies.—W.

*"Woe to the Crown that doth the Cowl obey!"*  
(page 425).

The violent measures carried on under the influence of Dunstan, for strengthening the Benedictine Order, were a leading cause of the second series of Danish invasions.—See Turner.—W.

*"Here Man more purely lives," &c. (page 429).*

"Bonum est nos hic esse, quia homo vivit purius, cadit rarius, surgit velocius, incedit cautius, quiescit securus, moritur felicius, purgatur citius, premiatur copiosius."—Bernard. "This sentence," says Dr. Whitaker, "is usually inscribed in some conspicuous part of the Cistercian houses"—W.

"Whom Obloquy pursues with hideous bark:"  
(page 432).

The list of foul names bestowed upon those poor creatures is long and curious:—and, as is, alas! too natural, most of the opprobrious appellations are drawn from circumstances into which they were forced by their persecutors, who even consolidated their miseries into one reproachful term, calling them Patarenians, or Paturing, from *pati*, to suffer.

"No more with wolves, who mangle them, for the pine  
And gnaw their bones, than they are in the place  
Of men, of birds, their end is the same."  
See note on *Richard*, in the *Life of Richard*.  
See also, where terms and aspects of the story,  
on the same subject, through persons and places.

"And the green lizard and the gilded newt  
Lead unmolested lives, and die of age"  
(page 433, xxi., ll. 7, 8).

These two lines are adopted from a MS. written about the year 1770, which accidentally fell into my possession. The close of the preceding Sonnet on monastic voluptuousness is taken from the same source, as is the verse, "Where Venus sits," &c., and the line, "Once ye were holy, ye are holy still," in a subsequent Sonnet.—W.

"One (like those prophets whom God sent of old)  
Transfigured," &c. (page 437).

"M. Latimer suffered his keeper very quietly to pull off his hose, and his other array, which to look unto was very simple: and being stripped into his shroud, he seemed as comely a person to them that were present, as one should lightly see: and whereas in his clothes he appeared a withered and crooked sillie (weak) olde man, he now stood bold upright, as comely a father as one might lightly behold. . . . Then they brought a faggotte, kindled with fire, and laid the same downe at doctor Ridley's feete. To whome M. Latimer spake in this manner, 'Bee of good comfort, master Ridley, and play the man: we shall this day light such a candle by God's grace in England, as I trust shall never bee put out.'—Fox's *Acts*, &c."

Similar alterations in the outward figure and deportment of persons brought to like trial were not uncommon. See note to the above passage in Dr. Wordsworth's "Ecclesiastical Biography," for an example in a humble Welsh fisherman.—W.

"The gift exalting, and with playful smile:"  
(page 438).

"On foot they went, and took Salisbury in their way, purposely to see the good Bishop, who made Mr. Hooker sit at his own table; which Mr. Hooker boasted of with much joy and gratitude when he saw his mother and friends; and at the Bishop's parting with him, the Bishop gave him good counsel and his benediction, but forgot to give him money; which when the Bishop had considered, he sent a servant in all haste to call Richard back to him, and at Richard's return, the Bishop said to him, 'Richard, I sent for you back to lend you a horse which hath carried me many a mile, and I thank God with much ease,' and presently delivered into his hand a walking-staff, with which he professed he had travelled through many parts of Germany; and he said,

'Richard, I do not give, but lend you my horse; be sure you be honest, and bring my horse back to me, at your return this way to Oxford. And I do now give you ten groats to bear your charges to Exeter; and here is ten groats more, which I charge you to deliver to your mother, and tell her I send her a Bishop's benediction with it, and beg the continuance of her prayers for me. And if you bring my horse back to me, I will give you ten groats more to carry you on foot to the college; and so God bless you, good Richard.'—See WALTON'S *Life of Richard Hooker*.—W.

"craftily incites  
The overweening, personates the mad—"  
(page 439, xli., ll. 10, 11).

A common device in religious and political conflicts.—See *Strype* in support of this instance.—W.

LAUD (page 440).

In this age a word cannot be said in praise of Laud, or even in compassion for his fate, without incurring a charge of bigotry; but fearless of such imputation, I concur with Hume, "that it is sufficient for his vindication to observe that his errors were the most excusable of all those which prevailed during that zealous period." A key to the right understanding of those parts of his conduct that brought the most odium upon him in his own time, may be found in the following passage of his speech before the bar of the House of Peers:—"Ever since I came in place, I have laboured nothing more than the external publick worship of God, so much slighted in divers parts of this kingdom, might be preserved, and that with as much decency and uniformity as might be. For I evidently saw that the public neglect of God's service in the outward face of it, and the nasty lying of many places dedicated to that service, had almost cast a damp upon the true and inward worship of God, which while we live in the body, *we cannot perform but in a little enough to keep it in a way of order*."—W.

THE PILGRIM FATHERS (pages 443, 444).

American episcopacy, in union with the church in England, strictly belongs to the general subject; and I here make my acknowledgments to my American friends, Bishop Doane, and Mr. Henry Reed of Philadelphia, for having suggested to me the propriety of adverting to it, and pointed out the virtues and intellectual qualities of Bishop White, which so eminently fitted him for the great work he undertook. Bishop White was consecrated at Lambeth, Feb. 4, 1787, by Archbishop Moore; and before his long life was closed, twenty-six bishops had been consecrated in America, by himself. For his character and opinions, see his own numerous Works, and a "Sermon in commemoration of him, by George Washington Doane, Bishop of New Jersey."—W.

"A genial hearth ————  
And a refined rusticity, belong  
To the neat mansion" (page 444, xviii., ll. 1-3).

Among the benefits arising, as Mr. Coleridge has well observed, from a Church establishment of endowments corresponding with the wealth of

the country to which it belongs, may be reckoned as eminently important, the examples of civility and refinement which the clergy stationed at intervals, afford to the whole people. The established clergy in many parts of England have long been, as they continue to be, the principal bulwark against barbarism, and the link which unites the sequestered peasantry with the intellectual advancement of the age. Nor is it below the dignity of the subject to observe, that their taste, as acting upon rural residences and scenery often furnishes models which country gentlemen, who are more at liberty to follow the caprices of fashion, might profit by. The precincts of an old residence must be treated by ecclesiastics with respect, both from prudence and necessity. I remember being much pleased, some years ago, at Rose Castle, the rural seat of the See of Carlisle, with a style of garden and architecture, which, if the place had belonged to a wealthy layman, would no doubt have been swept away. A parsonage-house generally stands not far from the church; this proximity imposes favourable restraints, and sometimes suggests an affecting union of the accommodations and elegancies of life with the outward signs of plety and mortality. With pleasure I recall to mind a happy instance of this in the residence of an old and much-valued friend in Oxfordshire. The house and church stand parallel to each other, at a small distance; a circular lawn or rather grass-plot, spreads between them; shrubs and trees curve from each side of the dwelling, veiling, but not hiding, the church. From the front of this dwelling, no part of the burial-ground is seen; but as you wind by the side of the shrubs towards the steeple-end of the church, the eye catches a single, small, low, monumental headstone, moss-grown, sinking into, and gently inclining towards the earth. Advance, and the churchyard, populous and gay with glittering tombstones, opens upon the view. This humble, and beautiful parsonage called forth a tribute, for which see the seventh of the "Miscellaneous Sonnets," Part III.—W.

*Sonnet XXXII. (page 448).*

This is still continued in many churches in Westmoreland. It takes place in the month of July, when the floor of the stalls is strewn with fresh rushes; and hence it is called the "Rush-bearing."—W.

*"Teaching us to forget them, or forgive"*  
(page 449, XXXV., l. 10).

This is borrowed from an affecting passage in Mr. George Dyer's history of Cambridge.—W.

*"Had we, like them, endured  
Sore stress of apprehension"*  
(page 449, XXXVII., ll. 5, 6).

See Burnet, who is unusually animated on this subject; the east wind, so anxiously expected and prayed for, was called the "Protestant wind."—W.

*"Yet will we not conceal the precious Cross,  
Like men ashamed;"* (page 450, XL., ll. 9, 10).

The Lutherans have retained the Cross within their churches: it is to be regretted that we have not done the same.—W.

*"Or like the Alpine Mount, that takes its name  
From roseate hues;"* &c. (page 452, XLVI., ll. 5, 6).

Some say that Monte Rosa takes its name from a belt of rock at its summit—a very unpoetical and scarcely a probable supposition.—W.

*"Wings at my shoulders seem to play"*  
(page 458, line 49).

In these lines I am under obligation to the exquisite picture of "Jacob's Dream," by Mr. Alstone, now in America. It is pleasant to make this public acknowledgment to a man of genius, whom I have the honour to rank among my friends.—W.

*"But if thou, like Cocytus,"* &c.  
(page 464, IV., l. 5).

Many years ago, when I was at Greta Bridge, in Yorkshire, the hostess of the inn, proud of her skill in etymology, said, that "the name of the river was taken from the *bridge*, the form of which, as every one must notice, exactly resembled a great A." Dr. Whitaker has derived it from the word of common occurrence in the North of England, "*to greet*;" signifying to lament aloud, mostly with weeping; a conjecture rendered more probable from the stony and rocky channel of both the Cumberland and Yorkshire rivers. The Cumberland Greta, though it does not, among the country people, take up *that* name till within three miles of its disappearance in the River Derwent, may be considered as having its source in the mountain cove of Wythburn, and flowing through Thirlmere, the beautiful features of which lake are known only to those who, travelling between Grassmere and Keswick, have quitted the main road in the vale of Wythburn, and, crossing over to the opposite side of the lake, have proceeded with it on the right hand.

The channel of the Greta, immediately above Keswick, has, for the purposes of building, been in a great measure cleared of the immense stones which, by their concussion in high floods, produced the loud and awful noises described in the sonnet.

"The scenery upon this river," says Mr. Southey in his "Colloquies," "where it passes under the woody side of Latrigg, is of the finest and most memorable kind:—

—"ambiguo lapsu refutitque fuitque,  
Occurresque sibi venturas aspiciit undas;"—W.

*"By hooded Votaresses,"* &c. (p. 465, VIII., l. 11).

Attached to the church of Brigham was formerly a chantry, which held a moiety of the manor; and in the decayed parsonage some vestiges of monastic architecture are still to be seen.—W.

*MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS LANDING  
AT WORKINGTON (page 465).*

"The fears and impatience of Mary were so great," says Robertson, "that she got into a fish-hoat, and with about twenty attendants landed at Workington, in Cumberland; and thence she was conducted with many marks of respect to Carlisle." The apartment in which the Queen had slept at Workington Hall (where she was received by Sir Henry Curwen as became her rank and misfortunes) was long preserved, out of

respect to her memory, as she had left it; and one cannot but regret that some necessary alterations in the mansion could not be effected without its destruction.—W.

*STANZAS, &c. (page 465).*

St. Bees' Heads, anciently called the Cliff of Barf, are a conspicuous sea-mark for all vessels sailing in the N.E. parts of the Irish Sea. In a bay, one side of which is formed by the southern headland, stands the village of St. Bees; a place distinguished, from very early times, for its religious and scholastic foundations.

"St. Bees," says Nicholson and Burns, "had its name from Bega, an holy woman from Ireland, who is said to have founded here, about the year of our Lord 650, a small monastery, where afterwards a church was built in memory of her."

"The aforesaid religious house, being destroyed by the Danes, was restored by William de Meschens, son of Ranulph, and brother of Ranulph de Meschens, first Earl of Cumberland after the Conquest; and made a cell of a prior and six Benedictine monks to the Abbey of St. Mary at York."

Several traditions of miracles, connected with the foundation of the first of these religious houses, survive among the people of the neighbourhood; one of which is alluded to in these Stanzas; and another, of a somewhat bolder and more peculiar character, has furnished the subject of a spirited poem by the Rev. R. Parkinson, M.A., late Divinity Lecturer of St. Bees' College, and now Fellow of the Collegiate Church of Manchester.

After the dissolution of the monasteries, Archbishop Grindal founded a free school at St. Bees, from which the counties of Cumberland and Westmoreland have derived great benefit; and recently, under the patronage of the Earl of Lonsdale, a college has been established there for the education of ministers for the English Church. The old Conventual Church has been repaired under the superintendence of the Rev. Dr. Alinger, the Head of the College; and is well worthy of being visited by any strangers who might be led to the neighbourhood of this celebrated spot.

The form of stanza in this Poem, and something in the style of versification, are adopted from the "St. Monica," a poem of much beauty upon a monastic subject, by Charlotte Smith: a lady to whom English verse is under greater obligations than are likely to be either acknowledged or remembered. She wrote little, and that little unambitiously, but with true feeling for rural nature, at a time when nature was not much regarded by English Poets; for in point of time her writings preceded, I believe, those of Cowper and Burns.—W.

*'Are not, in sooth, their Requiem's sacred ties'*  
(page 467, l. 73).

I am aware that I am here treading upon tender ground; but to the intelligent reader I feel that no apology is due. The prayers of survivors, during passionate grief for the recent loss of relatives and friends, as the object of those prayers could no longer be the suffering body of the dying, would naturally be ejaculated for the souls of the departed; the barriers between the two worlds dissolving before the power

of love and faith. The ministers of religion, from their habitual attendance upon sick-beds, would be daily witnesses of these benign results, and hence would be strongly tempted to aim at giving to them permanence, by embodying them in rites and ceremonies, recurring at stated periods. All this, as it was in course of nature, so was it blameless, and even praiseworthy; since some of its effects, in that rude state of society, could not but be salutary. No reflecting person, however, can view without sorrow the abuses which rose out of thus formalising sublime instincts, and disinterested movements of passion, and perverting them into means of gratifying the selfishness and rapacity of the priest-hood. But, while we deplore and are indignant at these abuses, it would be a great mistake if we imputed the origin of the offices to prospective selfishness on the part of the monks and clergy; they were at first sincere in their sympathy, and in their degree dupes rather of their own creed, than artful and designing men. Charity is, upon the whole, the safest guide that we can take in judging our fellow-men, whether of past ages, or of the present time.—W.

*"And they are led by noble Hillary" (page 469).*

The Tower or Refuge, an ornament to Douglas Bay, was erected chiefly through the humanity and zeal of Sir William Hillary; and he also was the founder of the lifeboat establishment at that place; by which, under his superintendence, and often by his exertions at the imminent hazard of his own life, many seamen and passengers have been saved.—W.

*BY A RETIRED MARINER (page 470).*

This unpretending sonnet is by a gentleman nearly connected with me, and I hope, as it falls so easily into its place, that both the writer and the reader will excuse its appearance here.—W.

*"Off with you cloud, old Snafell!" (p. 471, XXI, l. 9).*

The summit of this mountain is well chosen by Cowley as the scene of the "Vision," in which the spectral angel discourses with him concerning the government of Oliver Cromwell. "I am not myself," says he, "on the top of that famous hill in the Island Mona, which has the prospect of three great, and not long since most happy, kingdoms. As soon as ever I looked upon them, they called forth the sad representation of all the sins and all the miseries that had overwhelmed them these twenty years." It is not to be denied that the changes now in progress, and the passions, and the way in which they work, strikingly resemble those which led to the disasters the philosophic writer so feelingly bewails. God grant that the resemblance may not become still more striking as months and years advance! —W.

*ON REVISITING DUNOLLY CASTLE*  
(page 472).

This ingenious piece of workmanship, as I afterwards learned, had been executed for their own amusement by some labourers employed about the place.—W.

*Sonnet XXIX: CAVE OF STAFFA (p. 473).*

The reader may be tempted to exclaim, "How came this and the two following sonnets to be

written, after the dissatisfaction expressed in the preceding one?" In fact, at the risk of incurring the reasonable displeasure of the master of the steamboat, I returned to the cave, and explored it under circumstances more favourable to those imaginative impressions which it is so wonderfully fitted to make upon the mind.—W.

*"Hope smiled when your nativity was cast,  
Children of Summer!"* (page 474, XXXI.).

Upon the head of the columns which form the front of the cave, rests a body of decomposed basaltic matter, which was richly decorated with that large bright flower, the ox-eyed daisy. I had noticed the same flower growing with profusion among the bold rocks on the western coast of the Isle of Man, making a brilliant contrast with their black and gloomy surfaces.—W.

#### IONA. UPON LANDING (page 474).

The four last lines of this sonnet are adopted from a well-known sonnet of Russel, as conveying my feeling better than any words of my own could do.—W.

#### THE RIVER EDEN, CUMBERLAND (page 476).

It is to be feared that there is more of the poet than the sound etymologist in this derivation of the name Eden. On the western coast of Cumberland is a rivulet which enters the sea at Moresby, known also in the neighbourhood by the name of Eden. May not the latter syllable come from the word *Dean*, a valley? Langdale, near Ambleside, is by the inhabitants called Langden. The former syllable occurs in the name Emont, a principal feeder of the Eden; and the stream which flows, when the tide is out, over Cartmel sands, is called the Ea—*au*, French—aqua, Latin.—W.

#### "Canal, and Viaduct, and Railway, tell!" (page 477, XLII., l. 14).

At Corby, a few miles below Nunnery, the Eden is crossed by a magnificent viaduct; and another of these works is thrown over a deep glen or ravine, at a very short distance from the main stream.—W.

#### "A weight of awe, not easy to be borne" (page 477, XLIII., l. 1).

The daughters of Long Meg, placed in a perfect circle eighty yards in diameter, are seventy-two in number above ground; a little way out of the circle stands Long Meg herself, a single stone, eighteen feet high. When I first saw this monument, as I came upon it by surprise, I might over-rate its importance as an object; but, though it will not bear a comparison with Stonehenge, I must say I have not seen any other relic of those dark ages which can pretend to rival it in singularity and dignity of appearance.—W.

#### TO THE EARL OF LONSDALE (page 477).

This sonnet was written immediately after certain trials, which took place at the Cumberland Assizes, when the Earl of Lonsdale, in consequence of repeated and long-continued attacks upon his character, through the local press, had

thought it right to prosecute the conductors and proprietors of three several journals. A verdict of libel was given in one case; and, in the others, the prosecutions were withdrawn, upon the individuals retracting and disavowing the charges, expressing regret that they had been made, and promising to abstain from the like in future.—W.

#### "Descending to the worm in charity;" (page 500, l. 32).

I am indebted, here, to a passage in one of Mr. Digby's valuable works.—W.

#### Sonnet IV (page 514, l. 14).

"All change is perilous and all chance unsound."  
SPENSER.—W.

#### Sonnet VIII. (page 515).

These lines were written several years ago, when reports prevailed of cruelties committed in many parts of America, by men making a law of their own passions. A far more formidable, as being a more deliberate mischief, has appeared among those States, which have lately broken faith with the public creditor in a manner so infamous. I cannot, however, but look at both evils under a similar relation to inherent good, and hope that the time is not distant when our brethren of the West will wipe off this stain from their name and nation.—W.

#### Additional Note.

I am happy to add that this anticipation is already partly realised; and that the reproach addressed to the Pennsylvanians in the next sonnet is no longer applicable to them. I trust that those other States to which it may yet apply will soon follow the example now set them by Philadelphia, and redeem their credit with the world.—W. 1850.

#### THE HORN OF EGREMONT CASTLE (page 535).

This story is a Cumberland tradition. I have heard it also related of the Hall of Hutton John, an ancient residence of the Hudlestons, in a sequestered valley upon the river Dacor.—W.

#### THE RUSSIAN FUGITIVE (page 541).

Peter Henry Bruce, having given in his entertaining Memoirs the substance of this Tale, affirms that, besides the concurring reports of others, he had the story from the lady's own mouth.

The Lady Catherine, mentioned towards the close, is the famous Catherine, then bearing that name as the acknowledged Wife of Peter the Great.—W.

#### THE FARMER OF TILSBURY VALE (page 569).

With this picture, which was taken from real life, compare the imaginative one of "The Reverie of Poor Susan," page 187; and see (to make up the deficiencies of this class) "The Excursion," *passim*.—W.

#### Moss Campion (*Silene acaulis*) (page 581 n.).

This most beautiful plant is scarce in England, though it is found in great abundance upon the mountains of Scotland. The first specimen I

ever saw of it, in its native bed, was singularly fine, the tuft or cushion being at least eight inches in diameter, and the root proportionably thick. I have only met with it in two places among our mountains, in both of which I have since sought for it in vain.

Botanists will not, I hope, take it ill, if I caution them against carrying off, inconsiderately, rare and beautiful plants. This has often been done, particularly from Ingleborough and other mountains in Yorkshire, till the species have totally disappeared, to the great regret of lovers of nature living near the places where they grew.—W.

*"From the most gentle creature nursed in fields" (Mystic, vi., l. 23).*

This way of indicating the name of my lamented friend has been found fault with; perhaps rightly so; but I may say in justification of the double sense of the word, that similar allusions are not uncommon in epitaphs. One of the best in our language in verse, I ever read, was upon a person who bore the name of Palmer; and the course of the thought, throughout, turned upon the Life of the Departed, considered as a pilgrimage. Nor can I think that the objection in the present case will have much force with any one who remembers Charles Lamb's beautiful sonnet addressed to his own name, and ending,

"No deed of mine shall shame thee, gentle name!"  
—W.

#### EXTEMPORE EFFUSION UPON THE DEATH OF JAMES HOGG (page 586).

Walter Scott . . . died 21st Sept., 1832.  
S. T. Coleridge . . . " 25th July, 1834.  
Charles Lamb . . . " 27th Dec., 1834.  
Geo. Crabbe . . . " 3rd Feb., 1832.  
Felicia Hemans . . . " 16th May, 1835.

—W.

#### THE EXCURSION. PREFACE (p. 755, ll. 83, 84).

*"Descend, prophetic Spirit! that inspir'st  
The human Soul," &c.*

"Not mine own fears, nor the prophetic Soul  
Of the wide world dreaming on things to come."

SHAKESPEARE'S *Sonnets*.—W.

*"—much did he see of men" (page 761).*

At the risk of giving a shock to the prejudices of artificial society, I have ever been ready to pay homage to the aristocracy of nature; under a conviction that vigorous human-heartedness is the constituent principle of true taste. It may still, however, be satisfactory to have prose testimony how far a character, employed for purposes of imagination, is founded upon general fact. I, therefore, subjoin an extract from an author who had opportunities of being well acquainted with a class of men, from whom my own personal knowledge emboldened me to draw this portrait.

"We learn from Cæsar and other Roman Writers, that the travelling merchants who frequented Gaul and other barbarous countries, either newly conquered by the Roman arms, or bordering on the Roman conquests, were ever the first to make the inhabitants of those countries familiarly acquainted with the Roman modes of life, and to inspire them with an inclination to

follow the Roman fashions, and to enjoy Roman conveniences. In North America, travelling merchants from the Settlements have done and continue to do much more towards civilizing the Indian natives, than all the missionaries, papist or protestant, who have ever been sent among them.

"It is farther to be observed, for the credit of this most useful class of men, that they commonly contribute, by their personal manners, no less than by the sale of their wares, to the refinement of the people among whom they travel. Their dealings form them to great quickness of wit and acuteness of judgment. Having constant occasion to recommend themselves and their goods, they acquire habits of the most obliging attention, and the most insinuating address. As in their peregrinations they have opportunity of contemplating the manners of various men and various cities, they become eminently skilled in the knowledge of the world. As they wander, each of them through thinly-inhabited districts, they form habits of reflection and of sublime contemplation. With all these qualifications, no wonder, that they should often be, in remote parts of the country, the best mirrors of fashion, and censors of manners; and should contribute much to polish the roughness, and soften the rusticity of our peasantry. It is not more than twenty or thirty years since a young man going from any part of Scotland to England, of purpose to carry the pack, was considered as going to lead the life and acquire the fortune of a gentleman. When, after twenty years' absence, in that honourable line of employment, he returned with his acquisitions to his native country, he was regarded as a gentleman to all intents and purposes."—HERON'S *Journey in Scotland*, vol. i. p. 89.—W.

*"Lost in unsearchable eternity!" (page 788).*

Since this paragraph was composed, I have read with so much pleasure, in Burnet's "Theory of the Earth," a passage expressing corresponding sentiments, excited by objects of a similar nature, that I cannot forbear to transcribe it.

"Siquid verò Natura nobis dedit spectaculum, in hæc tellure, verè gratum, et philosopho dignum, id semel mihi contigisse arbitror; cum ex celsissima rupe speculabundus ad oram maris Mediterranei, hinc æquor cœruleum, hinc tractus Alpino prospecti; nihil quidem magis dispar aut dissimile, nec in suo genere, magis egregium et singulare. Hoc theatrum ego facillè pretulerim Romanis cunctis, Græcis; atque id quod natura hæc spectandum exhibet, scenicis ludis omnibus, aut amphitheatri certaminibus. Nihil hæc elegans aut venustum, sed ingens et magnificum, et quod placet magnitudine sua et quâdam specie immensitatis. Hinc intuebar maris aequabilem superficiem, usque et usque diffusam, quantum maximum oculorum acies ferri potuit; hinc disruptissimam terræ faciem, et vastas moles variè elevatas aut depressas, erectas, propendentes, reclinatas, coarctatas, omni situ inæquali et turbido. Placuit, ex hæc parte, Nature unitas et simplicitas, et inexhausta quedam planities; ex alterâ, multiformis confusio magnorum corporum, et insanæ rerum strages: quas cum intuebar, non urbis alicujus aut oppidi, sed contracti mundi rudera, ante oculos habere mihi visus sum.

"In singulis ferè montibus erat aliquid insolens et mirabile, sed præ ceteris mihi placebat illa, quæ sedebam, rupes; erat maxima et altissima, et quæ terram respiciebat, molliori ascensu altitudinem suam dissimulabat: quia verò mare, horrendum præcops, et quasi ad perpendicularum facta, instar parietis. Præterea facies illa marina adeo erat levis ac uniformis (quod in rupibus aliquando observare licet) ac si scissa fuisset a summo ad imum, in illo plano; vel terræ motu aliquo, aut fulmine, divisa.

"Ima pars rupis erat cava, recessusque habuit, et saxeos specus, euntes in vacuum montem; sive naturâ pridem factos, sive exesos mari, et undarum crebris ictibus: In hos enim cum impetu ruebant et fragore, astuantis maris fluctus; quos iterum spumantes reddidit antrum, et quas i ab imo ventre evomit.

"Dextrum latus montis erat præruptum, aspero saxo et nudâ caute; sinistrum non adeo neglexerat Natura, arboribus utpote ornatum: et per pedem montis rivus limpide aque prorupit; qui cum vicinam vallem irrigaverat, lento motu serpens, et per varios meandros, quasi ad protrahendam vitam, in magno mari absorptus subito periit. Denique in summo vertice promontorii, commodè eninebat saxum, cui insidebam contemplabundus. Vale augusta sedes, Rege digna: Augusta rupes, semper mihi memoranda!"—*Page 89. Telluris Theoria sacra, etc. Editio secunda.*—W.

"Of Mississippi, or that northern stream"  
(page 799).

"A man is supposed to improve by going out into the *World*, by visiting *London*. Artificial man does; he extends with his sphere; but, alas! that sphere is microscopic; it is formed of minute, and he surrenders his genuine vision to the artist, in order to embrace it in his ken. His bodily senses grow acute, even to barren and inhuman pruriency; while his mental become proportionally obtuse. The reverse is the Man of Mind: he who is placed in the sphere of Nature and of God, might be a mock at Tattersall's and Brooks's, and a sneer at St. James's: he would certainly be swallowed alive by the first *Pizarro* that crossed him:—But when he walks along the river of Amazons; when he rests his eye on the unrivalled Andes; when he measures the long and watered savannah; or contemplates, from a sudden promontory, the distant vast Pacific—and feels himself a freeman in this vast theatre, and commanding each ready produced fruit of this wilderness, and each progeny of this stream—his exaltation is not less than imperial. He is as gentle, too, as he is great: his emotions of tenderness keep pace with his elevation of sentiment; for he says, "These were made by a good Being, who, unsought by me, placed me here to enjoy them." He becomes at once a child and a king. His mind is in himself; from hence he argues, and from hence he acts, and he argues unerringly, and acts magisterially; his mind in himself is also in his God; and therefore he loves, and therefore he soars."—From the notes upon "The Hurricane," a Poem, by William Gilbert.

The Reader, I am sure, will thank me for the above quotation, which, though from a strange book, is one of the finest passages of modern English prose.—W.

"'Tis, by comparison, an easy task  
Earth to despise," &c. (page 803).

See, upon this subject, Baxter's most interesting review of his own opinions and sentiments in the decline of life. It may be found (lately reprinted) in Dr. Wordsworth's "Ecclesiastical Biography."—W.

"Alas! the endowment of immortal power  
Is matched unequally with custom, time," &c.  
(page 804).

This subject is treated at length in the Ode—"Intimations of Immortality," page 587.—W.

"Knowing the heart of man is set to be" &c.  
(page 806).

The passage quoted from Daniel is taken from a poem addressed to the Lady Margaret, Countess of Cumberland, and the two last lines, printed in Italics, are by him translated from Seneca. The whole poem is very beautiful. I will transcribe four stanzas from it, as they contain an admirable picture of the state of a wise Man's mind in a time of public commotion.

"Nor is he moved with all the thunder-cracks  
Of tyrant's threats, or with the surly brow  
Of Power, that proudly sits on others' crimes;  
Charged with more crying sins than those he checks.  
The storms of sad confusion that may grow  
Up in the present for the coming times,  
Appal not him; that hath no side at all,  
But of himself, and knows the worst can fall.

"Although his heart (so near allied to earth)  
Cannot but pity the perplexed state  
Of troublous and distressed mortality,  
That thus make way unto the ugly birth  
Of their own sorrows, and do still beget  
Affliction upon Imbecility:  
Yet, seeing thus the course of things must run,  
He looks thereon not strange, but as fore-told.

"And whilst distraught ambition compasses,  
And is encompassed, while as craft deceives,  
And is deceived; whilst man doth ransack man,  
And builds on blood, and rises by distress;  
And th' inheritance of desolation leaves  
To great-expecting hopes: He looks thereon,  
As from the shore of peace, with unwet eye,  
And bears no venture in Impiety.

"Thus, Lady, fares that man that hath prepared  
A rest for his desires; and sees all things  
Beneath him; and hath learned this book of man,  
Full of the notes of frailty; and compared  
The best of glory with her sufferings;  
By whom, I see, you labour all you can  
To plant your heart! and set your thoughts as near  
His glorious mansion as your powers can bear."—W.

"Or rather, as we stand on holy earth  
And have the dead around us" (page 832).

"Leo. You, Sir, could help me to the history  
Of half these graves?  
Priest. For eight-score winters past,  
With what I've witnessed, and with what I've  
heard,  
Perhaps I might; . . .  
By turning o'er these hillocks one by one,  
We two could travel, Sir, through a strange  
round;  
Yet all in the broad highway of the world."—*See The Brothers.*—W.

"And gentle 'Nature grieved,' &c. (page 887).

"And suffering Nature grieved that one should die."

SOUTHERN'S *Retrospect*.—W.

"And whence that tribute? wherefore these regards?" (page 887).

The sentiments and opinions here uttered are in unison with those expressed in the following Essay upon Epitaphs, which was furnished by me for Mr. Coleridge's periodical work, "The Friend;" and as they are dictated by a spirit congenial to that which pervades this and the two succeeding books, the sympathising reader will not be displeased to see the Essay here annexed.—W.

### ESSAY UPON EPITAPHS.

It need scarcely be said, that an Epitaph presupposes a Monument, upon which it is to be engraven. Almost all Nations have wished that certain external signs should point out the places where their dead are interred. Among savage tribes unacquainted with letters this has mostly been done either by rude stones placed near the graves, or by mounds of earth raised over them. This custom proceeded obviously from a twofold desire; first, to guard the remains of the deceased from irreverent approach or from savage violation; and, secondly, to preserve their memory. "Never any," says Camden, "neglected burial but some savage nations, as the Bactrians, which cast their dead to the dogs; some varlet philosophers, as Diogenes, who desired to be devoured of fishes; some dissolute courtiers, as Mæceenas, who was wont to say, 'Non tumulum curo; sepelitur natura relicto.'"

"I'm careless of a grave:—Nature her dead will save."

As soon as nations had learned the use of letters, epitaphs were inscribed upon these monuments; in order that their intention might be more surely and adequately fulfilled. I have derived monuments and epitaphs from two sources of feeling: but these do in fact resolve themselves into one. The invention of epitaphs, Weever, in his "Discourse of Funeral Monuments," says rightly, "proceeded from the presage or fore-feeling of immortality, implanted in all men naturally, and is referred to the scholars of Linus the Theban poet, who flourished about the year of the world two thousand seven hundred; who first bewailed this Linus their Master, when he was slain, in doleful verses, then called of him *CElina*, afterwards *Epitaphia*, for that they were first sung at burials, after engraved upon the sepulchres."

And, verily, without the consciousness of a principle of immortality in the human soul, Man could never have had awakened in him the desire to live in the remembrance of his fellows: mere love, or the yearning of kind towards kind, could not have produced it. The dog or horse perishes in the field, or in the stall, by the side of his companions, and is incapable of anticipating the sorrow with which his surrounding associates shall bemoan his death, or pine for his loss; he cannot pre-conceive this regret, he can form no thought of it; and therefore cannot possibly have a desire to leave such regret or remembrance behind him. Add to the principle of love which exists in the inferior animals, the faculty of

reason which exists in Man alone; will the conjunction of these account for the desire? Doubtless it is a necessary consequence of this conjunction; yet not I think as a direct result, but only to be come at through an intermediate thought, viz. that of an intimation or assurance within us, that some part of our nature is imperishable. At least the proceeding, in order of birth, of one feeling to the other, is unquestionable.

If we look back upon the days of childhood, we shall find that the time is not in remembrance when, with respect to our own individual Being, the mind was without this assurance; whereas, the wish to be remembered by our friends or kindred after death, or even in absence, is, as we shall discover, a sensation that does not form itself till the *social* feelings have been developed, and the Reason has connected itself with a wide range of objects. Forlorn, and cut off from communication with the best part of his nature, must that man be, who should derive the sense of immortality, as it exists in the mind of a child, from the same unthinking gaiety or liveliness of animal spirits with which the lamb in the meadow, or any other irrational creature is endowed; who should ascribe it, in short, to blank ignorance in the child; to an inability arising from the imperfect state of his faculties to come, in any point of his being, into contact with a notion of death; or to an unreflecting acquiescence in what had been instilled into him! Has such an unfoldment of the mysteries of nature, though he may have forgotten his former self, ever noticed the early, obstinate, and unappeasable inquisitiveness of children upon the subject of origination? This single fact proves outwardly the monstrousness of those suppositions: for, if we had no direct external testimony that the minds of very young children meditate feelingly upon death and immortality, these enquiries, which we all know they are perpetually making concerning the *whence*, do necessarily include correspondent habits of interrogation concerning the *whither*. Origin and tendency are notions inseparably co-relative. Never did a child stand by the side of a running stream, pondering within himself what power was the feeder of the perpetual current, from what never-wearied sources the body of water was supplied, but he must have been inevitably propelled to follow this question by another: "Towards what abyss is it in progress? what receptacle can contain the mighty influx?" And the spirit of the answer must have been, though the word might be sea or ocean, accompanied perhaps with an image gathered from a map, or from the real object in nature—these might have been the *letter*, but the *spirit* of the answer must have been *as inevitably*,—a receptacle without bounds or dimensions:—nothing less than infinity. We may, then, be justified in asserting, that the sense of immortality, if not a co-existent and twin-birth with Reason, is among the earliest of her offspring; and we may further assert, that from these conjoined, and under their countenance, the human affections are gradually formed and opened out. This is not the place to enter into the recesses of these investigations; but the subject requires me here to make a plain avowal, that, for my own part, it is to me inconceivable, that the sympathies of love towards each other, which grow with our growth, could ever attain

any new strength, or even preserve the old, after we had received from the outward senses the impression of death, and were in the habit of having that impression daily renewed and its accompanying feeling brought home to ourselves, and to those we love; if the same were not counteracted by those communications with our internal Being, which are anterior to all these experiences, and with which *Revolution* coincides, and has through that coincidence alone (for otherwise it could not possess it) a power to affect us. I confess, with me the conviction is absolute, that, if the impression and sense of death were not thus counterbalanced, such a hollowness would pervade the whole system of things, such a want of correspondence and consistency, a disproportion so astounding betwixt means and ends, that there could be no repose, no joy. Were we to grow up unfostered by this genial warmth, a frost would chill the spirit, so penetrating and powerful, that there could be no motions of the life of love; and infinitely less could we have any wish to be remembered after we had passed away from a world in which each man had moved about like a shadow.—If, then, in a creature endowed with the faculties of foresight and reason, the social affections could not have unfolded themselves uncountenanced by the faith that Man is an immortal being; and if, consequently, neither could the individual dying have had a desire to survive in the remembrance of his fellows, nor on their side could they have felt a wish to preserve for future times vestiges of the departed; it follows, as a final inference, that without the belief in immortality, wherein these several desires originate, neither monuments nor epitaphs, in affectionate or laudatory commemoration of the deceased, could have existed in the world.

Simonides, it is related, upon landing in a strange country, found the corpse of an unknown person lying by the sea-side; he buried it, and was honoured throughout Greece for the piety of that act. Another ancient Philosopher, chancing to fix his eyes upon a dead body, regarded the same with slight, if not with contempt; saying, "See the shell of the flown bird!" But it is not to be supposed that the moral and tender-hearted Simonides was incapable of the lofty movements of thought, to which that other Sage gave way at the moment while his soul was intent only upon the indestructible being; nor, on the other hand, that he, in whose sight a lifeless human body was of no more value than the worthless shell from which the living fowl had departed, would not, in a different mood of mind, have been affected by those earthly considerations which had incited the philosophic Poet to the performance of that pious duty. And with regard to this latter we may be assured that, if he had been destitute of the capability of communing with the more exalted thoughts that appertain to human nature, he would have cared no more for the corpse of the stranger than for the dead body of a seal or porpoise which might have been cast up by the waves. We respect the corporeal frame of Man, not merely because it is the habitation of a rational, but of an immortal Soul. Each of these Sages was in sympathy with the best feelings of our nature; feelings which, though they seem opposite to each other, have another and a finer connection than that of contrast.—It

is a connection formed through the subtle progress by which, both in the natural and the moral world, qualities pass insensibly into their contraries, and things revolve upon each other. As, in sailing upon the orb of this planet, a voyage towards the regions where the sun sets, conducts gradually to the quarter where we have been accustomed to behold it come forth at its rising; and, in like manner, a voyage towards the east, the birthplace in our imagination of the morning, leads finally to the quarter where the sun is last seen when he departs from our eyes; so the contemplative Soul, travelling in the direction of mortality, advances to the country of everlasting life; and, in like manner, may she continue to explore those cheerful tracts, till she is brought back, for her advantage and benefit, to the land of transitory things—of sorrow and of tears.

On a midway point, therefore, which commands the thoughts and feelings of the two Sages whom we have represented in contrast, does the Author of that species of composition, the laws of which it is our present purpose to explain, take his stand. Accordingly, recurring to the twofold desire of guarding the remains of the deceased and preserving their memory, it may be said that a sepulchral monument is a tribute to a man as a human being; and that an epitaph (in the ordinary meaning attached to the word) includes this general feeling and something more; and is a record to preserve the memory of the dead, as a tribute due to his individual worth, for a satisfaction to the sorrowing hearts of the survivors, and for the common benefit of the living: which record is to be accomplished, not in a general manner, but, where it can, in *close connection with the bodily remains of the deceased*: and these, it may be added, among the modern nations of Europe, are deposited within, or contiguous to, their places of worship. In ancient times, as is well known, it was the custom to bury the dead beyond the walls of towns and cities; and among the Greeks and Romans they were frequently interred by the way-sides.

I could here pause with pleasure, and invite the Reader to indulge with me in contemplation of the advantages which must have attended such a practice. We might ruminate upon the beauty which the monuments, thus placed, must have borrowed from the surrounding images of nature—from the trees, the wild flowers, from a stream running perhaps within sight or hearing, from the beaten road stretching its weary length hard by. Many tender similitudes must these objects have presented to the mind of the traveller leaning upon one of the tombs, or reposing in the coolness of its shade, whether he had halted from weariness or in compliance with the invitation, "Pause, Traveller!" so often found upon the monuments. And to its epitaph also must have been supplied strong appeals to visible appearances or immediate impressions, lively and affecting analogies of life as a journey—death as a sleep overcoming the tired wayfarer—of misfortune as a storm that falls suddenly upon him—of beauty as a flower that passeth away, or of innocent pleasure as one that may be gathered—of virtue that standeth firm as a rock against the beating waves;—of hope "undermined insensibly like the poplar by the side of the river that has fed it," or blasted in a moment like a pine-tree

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by the stroke of lightning upon the mountain-top—of admonitions and heart-stirring remembrances, like a refreshing breeze that comes without warning, or the taste of the waters of an unexpected fountain. These, and similar suggestions, must have given, formerly, to the language of the senseless stone a voice enforced and endeared by the benignity of that nature with which it was in unison.—We, in modern times, have lost much of these advantages; and they are but in a small degree counterbalanced to the inhabitants of large towns and cities, by the custom of depositing the dead within, or contiguous to, their places of worship; however splendid or imposing may be the appearance of those edifices, or however interesting or salutary the recollections associated with them. Even were it not true that tombs lose their monitory virtue when thus obtruded upon the notice of men occupied with the cares of the world, and too often sullied and defiled by those cares, yet still, when death is in our thoughts, nothing can make amends for the want of the soothing influences of nature, and for the absence of those types of renovation and decay, which the fields and woods offer to the notice of the serious and contemplative mind. To feel the force of this sentiment, let a man only compare in imagination the unsightly manner in which our monuments are crowded together in the busy, noisy, unclean, and almost grassless churchyard of a large town, with the still seclusion of a Turkish cemetery, in some remote place; and yet further sanctified by the grove of cypress in which it is embosomed. Thoughts in the same temper as these have already been expressed with true sensibility by an ingenious Poet of the present day. The subject of his poem is "All Saints' Church, Derby:" he has been deploring the forbidding and unseemly appearance of its burial-ground, and uttering a wish, that in past times the practice had been adopted of interring the inhabitants of large towns in the country:—

"Then in some rural, calm, sequestered spot,  
Where healing Nature her benignant look  
Ne'er changes, save at that lone season, when,  
With tresses drooping o'er her sable stole,  
She yearly mourns the mortal doom of man,  
Her noblest work, (so Israel's virgin erst,  
With annual moan upon the mountains wept  
Their farrest gone,) there in that rural scene,  
So placid, so congenial to the wish  
The Christian feels, of peaceful rest within  
The silent grave, I would have stayed.

—wandered forth, where the cold dew of heaven  
Lay on the humbler graves around, what time  
The pale moon gazed upon the turfy mounds,  
Pensive, as though like me, in lonely muse,  
'Twere brooding on the dead inhumed beneath.  
There while with him, the holy man of Uz,  
Of human destiny I sympathised,  
Counting the long, long periods prophecy  
Decrees to roll, ere the great day arrives  
Of resurrection, oft the blue-eyed Spring  
Had met me with her blossoms, as the Dove,  
Of old, returned with olive leaf, to cheer  
The Patriarch mourning o'er a world destroyed:  
And I would bless her gifts; for to me  
'Tis sweet to trace the consonance that links  
As one, the works of Nature and the word  
Of God."

JOHN EDWARDS.

A village churchyard, lying as it does in the lap of nature, may indeed be most favourably contrasted with that of a town of crowded

population; and sepulture therein combines many of the best tendencies which belong to the mode practised by the Ancients, with others peculiar to itself. The sensations of pious cheerfulness, which attend the celebration of the sabbath-day in rural places, are profitably chastised by the sight of the graves of kindred and friends, gathered together in that general home towards which the thoughtful yet happy spectators themselves are journeying. Hence a parish-church, in the stillness of the country, is a visible centre of a community of the living and the dead; a point to which are habitually referred the nearest concerns of both.

As, then, both in cities and in villages, the dead are deposited in close connection with our places of worship, with us the composition of an epitaph naturally turns, still more than among the nations of antiquity, upon the most serious and solemn affections of the human mind; upon departed worth—upon personal or social sorrow and admiration—upon religion, individual and social—upon time, and upon eternity. Accordingly, it suffices in ordinary cases, to secure a composition of this kind from censure, that it contain nothing that shall shock or be inconsistent with this spirit. But, to entitle an epitaph to praise, more than this is necessary. It ought to contain some thought or feeling belonging to the mortal or immortal part of our nature touchingly expressed; and if that be done, however general or even trite the sentiment may be, every man of pure mind will read the words with pleasure and gratitude. A husband bewails a wife; a parent breathes a sigh of disappointed hope over a lost child; a son utters a sentiment of filial reverence for a departed father or mother; a friend perhaps inscribes an eulogium recording the companionable qualities, or the solid virtues, of the tenant of the grave, whose departure has left a sadness upon his memory. This and a pious admonition to the living, and a humble expression of Christian confidence in immortality, is the language of a thousand churchyards; and it does not often happen that anything, in a greater degree discriminate or appropriate to the dead or to the living, is to be found in them. This want of discrimination has been ascribed by Dr. Johnson, in his Essay upon the epitaphs of Pope, to two causes; first, the scantiness of the objects of human praise; and, secondly, the want of variety in the characters of men; or, to use his own words, "to the fact, that the greater part of mankind have no character at all." Such language may be holden without blame among the generalities of common conversation; but does not become a critic and a moralist speaking seriously upon a serious subject. The objects of admiration in human nature are not scanty, but abundant; and every man has a character of his own, to the eye that has skill to perceive it. The real cause of the acknowledged want of discrimination in sepulchral memorials is this: That to analyse the characters of others, especially of those whom we love, is not a common or natural employment of men at any time. We are not anxious unerringly to understand the constitution of the minds of those who have soothed, who have cheered, who have supported us; with whom we have been long and daily pleased or delighted. The affections are their own justification. The light of love in our hearts

is a satisfactory evidence that there is a body of worth in the minds of our friends or kindred, whence that light has proceeded. We shrink from the thought of placing their merits and defects to be weighed against each other in the nice balance of pure intellect; nor do we find much temptation to detect the shades by which a good quality or virtue is discriminated in them from an excellence known by the same general name as it exists in the mind of another; and, least of all, do we incline to these refinements when under the pressure of sorrow, admiration, or regret, or when actuated by any of those feelings which incite men to prolong the memory of their friends and kindred, by records placed in the bosom of the all-uniting and equalising receptacle of the dead.

The first requisite, then, in an Epitaph is, that it should speak, in a tone which shall sink into the heart, the general language of humanity as connected with the subject of death—the source from which an epitaph proceeds—of death, and of life. To be born and to die are the two points in which all men feel themselves to be in absolute coincidence. This general language may be uttered so strikingly as to entitle an epitaph to high praise; yet it cannot lay claim to the highest unless other excellencies be superadded. Passing through all intermediate steps, we will attempt to determine at once what these excellencies are, and wherein consists the perfection of this species of composition.—It will be found to lie in a due proportion of the common or universal feeling of humanity to sensations excited by a distinct and clear conception, conveyed to the reader's mind, of the individual, whose death is deplored and whose memory is to be preserved; at least of his character as, after death, it appeared to those who loved him and lament his loss. The general sympathy ought to be quickened, provoked, and diversified, by particular thoughts, actions, images,—circumstances of age, occupation, manner of life, prosperity which the deceased had known, or adversity to which he had been subject; and these ought to be bound together and solemnised into one harmony by the general sympathy. The two powers should temper, restrain, and exalt each other. The reader ought to know who and what the man was whom he is called upon to think of with interest. A distinct conception should be given (implicitly where it can, rather than explicitly) of the individual lamented.—But the writer of an epitaph is not an anatomist, who dissects the internal frame of the mind; he is not even a painter, who executes a portrait at leisure and in entire tranquillity: his delineation, we must remember, is performed by the side of the grave; and, what is more, the grave of one whom he loves and admires. What purity and brightness is that virtue clothed in, the image of which must no longer bless our living eyes! The character of a deceased friend or beloved kinsman is not seen, nor—nor ought to be seen, otherwise than as a tree through a tender haze or a luminous mist, that spiritualises and beautifies it; that takes away, indeed, but only to the end that the parts which are not abstracted may appear more dignified and lovely; may impress and affect the more. Shall we say, then, that this is not truth, not a faithful image; and that, accordingly, the purposes of commemoration cannot be answered?—It is truth, and of the highest order;

for, though doubtless things are not apparent which did exist; yet, the object being looked at through this medium, parts and proportions are brought into distinct view which before had been only imperfectly or unconsciously seen: it is truth hallowed by love—the joint offspring of the worth of the dead and the affections of the living! This may easily be brought to the test. Let one, whose eyes have been sharpened by personal hostility to discover what was amiss in the character of a good man, hear the tidings of his death, and what a change is wrought in a moment! Enmity melts away; and, as it disappears, unsightliness, disproportion, and deformity, vanish; and, through the influence of commiseration, a harmony of love and beauty succeeds. Bring such a man to the tombstone on which shall be inscribed an epitaph on his adversary, composed in the spirit which we have recommended. Would he turn from it as from an idle tale? No;—the thoughtful look, the sigh, and perhaps the involuntary tear, would testify that it had a sane, a generous, and good meaning; and that on the writer's mind had remained an impression which was a true abstract of the character of the deceased; that his gifts and graces were remembered in the simplicity in which they ought to be remembered. The composition and quality of the mind of a virtuous man, contemplated by the side of the grave where his body is mouldering, ought to appear, and be felt as something midway between what he was on earth walking about with his living frailties, and what he may be presumed to be as a Spirit in heaven.

It suffices, therefore, that the trunk and the main branches of the worth of the deceased be boldly and unaffectedly represented. Any further detail, minutely and scrupulously pursued, especially if this be done with laborious and anti-aesthetic discriminations, must inevitably frustrate its own purpose; forcing the passing Spectator to this conclusion,—either that the dead did not possess the merits ascribed to him, or that they who have raised a monument to his memory, and must therefore be supposed to have been closely connected with him, were incapable of perceiving those merits; or at least during the act of composition had lost sight of them; for, the understanding having been so busy in its petty occupation, how could the heart of the mourner be other than cold? and in either of these cases, whether the fault be on the part of the buried person or the survivors, the memorial is unaffecting and profitless.

Much better is it to fall short in discrimination than to pursue it too far, or to labour it unfeelingly. For in no place are we so much disposed to dwell upon those points, of nature and condition, wherein all men resemble each other, as in the temple where the universal Father is worshipped, or by the side of the grave which gathers all human Beings to itself, and "equalises the lofty and the low." We suffer and we weep with the same heart; we love and are anxious for one another in one spirit; our hopes look to the same quarter; and the virtues by which we are all to be furthered and supported, as patience, meekness, good-will, justice, temperance, and temperate desires, are in an equal degree the concern of us all. Let an Epitaph, then, contain at least these acknowledgments to our common nature; nor let the sense of their

importance be sacrificed to a balance of opposite qualities or minute distinctions in individual character; which if they do not, (as will for the most part be the case,) when examined, resolve themselves into a trick of words, will even when they are true and just, for the most part be grievously out of place; for, as it is probable that few only have explored these intricacies of human nature, so can the tracing of them be interesting only to a few. But an epitaph is not a proud writing shut up for the studious: it is exposed to all—to the wise and the most ignorant; it is condescending, perspicuous, and lovingly solicited regard; its story and its beauties are brief, that the thoughtful, the busy, and the slothful, may not be deterred, nor the impatient tired: the stooping old man cons the engraven record like a second horn-book;—the child is proud that he can read it;—and the stranger is introduced through its mediation to the company of a friend: it is concerning all, and for all;—in the churchyard it is open to the day; the sun looks down upon the stone, and the rains of heaven beat against it.

Yet, though the writer who would excite sympathy is bound in this case, more than in any other, to give proof that he himself has been moved, it is to be remembered, that to raise a monument is a sober and a reflective act; that the inscription which it bears is intended to be permanent, and for universal perusal; and that, for this reason, the thoughts and feelings expressed should be permanent also—liberated from that weakness and anguish of sorrow which is in nature transitory, and which with instinctive decency retires from notice. The passions should be subdued, the emotions controlled; strong, indeed, but nothing unmanageable or wholly involuntary. Sentiment requires this, and truth requires it also; for how can the narrator otherwise be trusted? Moreover, a grave is a tranquillising object: resignation in course of time springs up from it as naturally as the wild flowers, besprinkling the turf with which it may be covered, or gathering round the monument by which it is defended. The very form and substance of the monument which has received the inscription, and the appearance of the letters, testifying with what a slow and laborious hand they must have been engraven, might seem to reproach the author who had given way on this occasion to transports of mind, or to quick turns of conflicting passion; though the same might constitute the life and beauty of a funeral oration or elegiac poem.

These sensations and judgments, acted upon perhaps unconsciously, have been one of the main causes why epitaphs so often personate the deceased, and represent him as speaking from his own tomb-stone. The departed Mortal is introduced telling you himself that his pains are gone; that a state of rest is come; and he conjures you to weep for him no longer. He admonishes with the voice of one experienced in the vanity of those affections which are confined to earthly objects, and gives a verdict like a superior Being, performing the office of a judge, who has no temptations to mislead him, and whose decision cannot but be dispassionate. Thus is death disarmed of its sting, and affliction unsubstantialised. By this tender fiction, the survivors bind themselves to a sedate sorrow, and employ the intervention of the imagination in order that the reason may speak her own language

earlier than she would otherwise have been enabled to do. This shadowy interposition also harmoniously unites the two worlds of the living and the dead by their appropriate affections. And it may be observed, that here we have an additional proof of the propriety with which sepulchral inscriptions were referred to the consciousness of immortality as their primal source.

I do not speak with a wish to recommend that an epitaph should be written in a more preferable style to the still more common one, in which what is said comes from the survivors directly; but rather to point out how natural those feelings are which have induced men, in all states and ranks of society, so frequently to adopt this mode. And this I have done chiefly in order that the laws, which ought to govern the composition of the other, may be better understood. This latter mode, namely, that in which the survivors speak in their own persons, seems to me upon the whole greatly preferable: as it admits a wider range of notices; and, above all, because, excluding the fiction which is the groundwork of the other, it rests upon a more solid basis.

Enough has been said to convey our notion of a perfect epitaph; but it must be borne in mind that one is meant which will best answer the general ends of that species of composition. According to the course pointed out, the worth of private life, through all varieties of situation and character, will be most honourably and profitably preserved in memory. Nor would the model recommended less suit public men, in all instances save of those persons who by the greatness of their services in the employments of peace or war, or by the surpassing excellence of their works in art, literature, or science, have made themselves not only universally known, but have filled the heart of their country with everlasting gratitude. Yet I must here pause to correct myself. In describing the general tenour of thought which epitaphs ought to hold, I have omitted to say, that if it be the actions of a man, or even some one conspicuous or beneficial act of local or general utility, which have distinguished him, and excited a desire that he should be remembered, then, of course, ought the attention to be directed chiefly to those actions or that act: and such sentiments dwell upon as naturally arise out of them or it. Having made this necessary distinction, I proceed.—The mighty benefactors of mankind, as they are not only known by the immediate survivors, but will continue to be known familiarly to latest posterity, do not stand in need of biographic sketches, in such a place; nor of delineations of character to individualise them. This is already done by their Works, in the memories of men. Their naked names, and a grand comprehensive sentiment of civic gratitude, patriotic love, or human admiration—or the utterance of some elementary principle most essential in the constitution of true virtue;—or a declaration touching that pious humility and self-abasement, which are ever most profound as minds are most susceptible of genuine exaltation—or an intuition, communicated in adequate words, of the sublimity of intellectual power;—these are the only tribute which can here be paid—the only offering that upon such an altar would not be unworthy.

\*What needs my Shakspeare for his honoured bones  
The labour of an age in jetted stones,

Or that his hollowed reliques should be hid  
 In some obscure and solitary place,  
 By some of Monks, great Hermit of Fame,  
 After need of them was no more witness to the name;  
 That in our works and in our common life  
 Had left the soul a precious monument,  
 And so conducted us to the world of life,  
 That kings and subjects should be glad to die." W.

"And spires whose 'silent finger points to  
 heaven'" (page 838).

An instinctive taste teaches men to build their churches in flat countries with spire-steeple, which as they cannot be referred to any other object, point as with silent finger to the sky and stars, and sometimes, when they reflect the brazen light of a rich though rainy sunset, appear like a pyramid of flame burning heavenward. See "The Friend," by S. T. Coleridge, No. 14, p. 223.

*That sycamore, which annually holds  
 Within its shade, as in a stately tent* (page 866).

"This Sycamore oft musical with Bees;  
 Such Tents the Patriarchs loved."

S. T. COLERIDGE.

*Perish the roses and the flowers of kings*  
 (page 872).

The "Transit gloria mundi" is finely expressed in the Introduction to the Foundation-charters of some of the ancient Abbeys. Some expressions

here used are taken from that of the Abbey of St. Mary's Furness, the translation of which is as follows:—

"Considering every day the uncertainty of life, that the roses and flowers of Kings, Emperors, and Dukes, and the crowns and palms of all the great, wither and decay; and that all things, with an uninterrupted course, tend to dissolution and death: I therefore," &c.—W.

—"*Earth has lent  
 Her waters, Air her breezes*" (page 876).

In treating this subject, it was impossible not to recollect, with gratitude, the pleasing picture, which, in his Poem of the Fleece, the excellent and amiable Dyer has given of the influences of manufacturing industry upon the face of this Island. He wrote at a time when machinery was first beginning to be introduced, and his benevolent heart prompted him to augur from it nothing but good. Truth has compelled me to dwell upon the baneful effects arising out of an ill-regulated and excessive application of powers so admirable in themselves.—W.

"*Binding herself by statute*" (page 888).

The discovery of Dr. Bell affords marvellous facilities for carrying this into effect; and it is impossible to overrate the benefit which might accrue to humanity from the universal application of this simple engine under an enlightened and conscientious government.—W.

# PREFACES

ETC., ETC.

MUCH the greatest part of the foregoing Poems has been so long before the Public that no prefatory matter, explanatory of any portion of them, or of the arrangement which has been adopted, appears to be required; and had it not been for the observations contained in those Prefaces upon the principles of Poetry in general they would not have been reprinted even as an Appendix in this Edition. [W. W. ed. 1849-53.]

## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION OF SEVERAL OF THE FOREGOING POEMS, PUBLISHED, WITH AN ADDITIONAL VOLUME, UNDER THE TITLE OF "LYRICAL BALLADS."

[*Note.*—In succeeding Editions, when the Collection was again collected and disposed, this Preface was transferred to the end of the Volumes as having little of a special application to their contents.]

THE first Volume of these Poems has already been submitted to general perusal. It was published, as an experiment, which, I hoped, might be of some use to ascertain, how far, by fitting to metrical arrangement a selection of the real language of men in a state of vivid sensation, that sort of pleasure and that quantity of pleasure may be imparted, which a Poet may rationally endeavour to impart.

I had formed no very inaccurate estimate of the probable effect of those Poems: I flattered myself that they who should be pleased with them would read them with more than common pleasure: and, on the other hand, I was well aware, that by those who should dislike them, they would be read with more than common dislike. The result has differed from my expectation in this only, that a greater number have been pleased than I ventured to hope I should please.

Several of my Friends are anxious for the success of these Poems, from a belief, that, if the views with which they were composed were indeed realised, a class of Poetry would be produced, well adapted to interest mankind permanently, and not unimportant in the quality, and in the multiplicity of its moral relations: and on this account they have advised me to prefix a systematic defence of the theory upon which the Poems were written. But I was unwilling to undertake the task, knowing that on this occasion the Reader would look coldly upon my arguments, since I might be suspected of having been principally influenced by the selfish and foolish hope of reasoning him into an approbation of these particular Poems: and I was still more unwilling to undertake the task, because, adequately to display the opinions, and fully to enforce the arguments, would require a space wholly disproportionate to a preface. For, to treat the subject with the clearness and coherence of which it is

susceptible, it would be necessary to give a full account of the present state of the public taste in this country, and to determine how far this taste is healthy or depraved; which, again, could not be determined, without pointing out in what manner language and the human mind act and react on each other, and without retracing the revolutions, not of literature alone, but likewise of society itself. I have therefore altogether declined to enter regularly upon this defence; yet I am sensible, that there would be something like impropriety in abruptly obtruding upon the Public, without a few words of introduction, Poems so materially different from those upon which general approbation is at present bestowed.

It is supposed, that by the act of writing in verse an Author makes a formal engagement that he will gratify certain known habits of association; that he not only thus apprises the Reader that certain classes of ideas and expressions will be found in his book, but that others will be carefully excluded. This exponent or symbol held forth by metrical language must in different eras of literature have excited very different expectations: for example, in the age of Catullus, Terence, and Suetrius, and that of Statius or Claudian; and in our own country, in the age of Shakspeare and Beaumont and Fletcher, and that of Donne and Cowley, or Dryden, or Pope. I will not take upon me to determine the exact import of the promise which, by the act of writing in verse, an Author in the present day makes to his reader: but it will undoubtedly appear to many persons that I have not fulfilled the terms of an engagement thus voluntarily contracted. They who have been accustomed to the gaudiness and inane phraseology of many modern writers, if they persist in reading this book to its conclusion, will, no doubt, frequently have to struggle with feelings of strangeness and awkwardness: they will look round for poetry, and will be induced to inquire by what species of courtesy these attempts can be permitted to assume that title. I hope therefore the reader will not censure me for attempting

to state what I have proposed to myself to perform; and also (as far as the limits of a preface will permit) to explain some of the chief reasons which have determined me in the choice of my purpose: that at least he may be spared any unpleasant feeling of disappointment, and that I myself may be protected from one of the most dishonourable accusations which can be brought against an Author; namely, that of an indolence which prevents him from endeavouring to ascertain what is his duty, or, when his duty is ascertained, prevents him from performing it.

The principal object, then, proposed in these Poems was to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them, throughout, as far as was possible in a selection of language really used by men, and, at the same time, to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect; and, further, and above all, to make these incidents and situations interesting by tracing in them, truly though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature: chiefly, as far as regards the manner in which we associate ideas in a state of excitement. Humble and rustic life was generally chosen, because, in that condition, the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language; because in that condition of life our elementary feelings coexist in a state of greater simplicity, and, consequently, may be more accurately contemplated, and more forcibly communicated; because the manners of rural life germinate from those elementary feelings, and, from the necessary character of rural occupations, are more easily comprehended, and are more durable; and, lastly, because in that condition the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature. The language, too, of these men has been adopted (purified indeed from what appear to be its real defects, from all lasting and rational causes of dislike or disgust) because such men hourly communicate with the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived; and because, from their rank in society and the sameness and narrow circle of their intercourse, being less under the influence of social vanity, they convey their feelings and notions in simple and unelaborated expressions. Accordingly, such a language, arising out of repeated experience and regular feelings, is a more permanent, and a far more philosophical language, than that which is frequently substituted for it by Poets, who think that they are conferring honour upon themselves and their art, in proportion as they separate themselves from the sympathies of men, and indulge in arbitrary and capricious habits of expression, in order to furnish food for fickle tastes, and fickle appetites, of their own creation<sup>1</sup>.

I cannot, however, be insensible to the present

outcry against the triviality and meanness, both of thought and language, which some of my contemporaries have occasionally introduced into their metrical compositions; and I acknowledge that this defect, where it exists, is more dishonourable to the Writer's own character than false refinement or arbitrary innovation, though I should contend at the same time, that it is far less pernicious in the sum of its consequences. From such verses the Poems in these volumes will be found distinguished at least by one mark of difference, that each of them has a worthy purpose. Not that I always began to write with a distinct purpose formally conceived; but habits of meditation have, I trust, so prompted and regulated my feelings, that my descriptions of such objects as strongly excite those feelings, will be found to carry along with them a purpose. If this opinion be erroneous, I can have little right to the name of a Poet. For all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: and though this be true, Poems to which any value can be attached were never produced on any variety of subjects but by a man who, being possessed of more than usual organic sensibility, had also thought long and deeply. For our continued influxes of feeling are modified and directed by our thoughts, which are indeed the representatives of all our past feelings; and, as by contemplating the relation of these general representatives to each other, we discover what is really important to men, so, by the repetition and continuance of this act, our feelings will be connected with important subjects, till at length, if we be originally possessed of much sensibility, such habits of mind will be produced, that, by obeying blindly and mechanically the impulses of those habits, we shall describe objects, and utter sentiments, of such a nature, and in such connection with each other, that the understanding of the Reader must necessarily be in some degree enlightened, and his affections strengthened and purified.

It has been said that each of these poems has a purpose. Another circumstance must be mentioned which distinguishes these Poems from the popular Poetry of the day: it is this, that the feeling therein developed gives importance to the action and situation, and not the action and situation to the feeling.

A sense of false modesty shall not prevent me from asserting, that the Reader's attention is pointed to this mark of distinction, far less for the sake of these particular Poems than from the general importance of the subject. The subject is indeed important! For the human mind is capable of being excited without the application of gross and violent stimulants; and he must have a very faint perception of its beauty and dignity who does not know this, and who does not further know, that one being is elevated above another, in proportion as he possesses this capability. It has therefore appeared to me, that to endeavour to produce or enlarge this capability is one of the best services in which, at any period, a Writer can be engaged; but this service, excellent at all times, is especially so at the present day. For a multitude of causes, unknown to former times, are now acting with a combined force to blunt the discriminating powers of the mind, and,

<sup>1</sup> It is worth while here to observe, that the affecting parts of Chaucer are almost always expressed in language pure and universally intelligible even to this day.

unfitting it for all voluntary exertion, to reduce it to a state of almost savage torpor. The most effective of these causes are the great national events which are daily taking place, and the increasing accumulation of men in cities, where the uniformity of their occupations produces a craving for extraordinary incident, which the rapid communication of intelligence hourly gratifies. To this tendency of life and manners the literature and theatrical exhibitions of the country have conformed themselves. The invaluable works of our elder writers, I had almost said the works of Shakespeare and Milton, are driven into neglect by frantic novels, sickly and stupid German Tragedies, and deluges of idle and extravagant stories in verse.—When I think upon this degrading thirst after outrageous stimulation, I am almost ashamed to have spoken of the feeble endeavour made in these volumes to counteract it; and, reflecting upon the magnitude of the general evil, I should be oppressed with no dishonourable melancholy, had I not a deep impression of certain inherent and indestructible qualities of the human mind, and likewise of certain powers in the great and permanent objects that act upon it, which are equally inherent and indestructible; and were there not added to this impression a belief, that the time is approaching when the evil will be systematically opposed, by men of greater powers, and with far more distinguished success.

Having dwelt thus long on the subjects and aim of these Poems, I shall request the Reader's permission to apprise him of a few circumstances relating to their *style*, in order, among other reasons, that he may not censure me for not having performed what I never attempted. The Reader will find that personifications of abstract ideas rarely occur in these volumes; and are utterly rejected, as an ordinary device to elevate the style, and raise it above prose. My purpose was to imitate, and, as far as possible, to adopt the very language of men; and assuredly such personifications do not make any natural or regular part of that language. They are, indeed, a figure of speech occasionally prompted by passion, and I have made use of them as such; but have endeavoured utterly to reject them as a mechanical device of style, or as a family language which Writers in metre seem to lay claim to by prescription. I have wished to keep the Reader in the company of flesh and blood, persuaded that by so doing I shall interest him. Others who pursue a different track will interest him likewise; I do not interfere with their claim, but wish to prefer a claim of my own. There will also be found in these volumes little of what is usually called poetic diction; as much pains has been taken to avoid it as is ordinarily taken to produce it; this has been done for the reason already alleged, to bring my language near to the language of men; and further, because the pleasure which I have proposed to myself to impart, is of a kind very different from that which is supposed by many persons to be the proper object of poetry. Without being culpably particular, I do not know how to give my Reader a more exact notion of the style in which it was my wish and intention to write, than by informing him that I have at all times endeavoured

to look steadily at my subject; consequently, there is I hope in these Poems little falsehood of description, and my ideas are expressed in language fitted to their respective importance. Something must have been gained by this practice, as it is friendly to one property of all good poetry, namely, good sense: but it has necessarily cut me off from a large portion of phrases and figures of speech which from father to son have long been regarded as the common inheritance of Poets. I have also thought it expedient to restrict myself still further, having abstained from the use of many expressions, in themselves proper and beautiful, but which have been foolishly repeated by bad Poets, till such feelings of disgust are connected with them as it is scarcely possible by any art of association to overpower.

If in a poem there should be found a series of lines, or even a single line, in which the language, though naturally arranged, and according to the strict laws of metre, does not differ from that of prose, there is a numerous class of critics, who, when they stumble upon these prosaisms, as they call them, imagine that they have made a notable discovery, and exult over the Poet as over a man ignorant of his own profession. Now these men would establish a canon of criticism which the Reader will conclude he must utterly reject, if he wishes to be pleased with these volumes. And it would be a most easy task to prove to him, that not only the language of a large portion of every good poem, even of the most elevated character, must necessarily, except with reference to the metre, in no respect differ from that of good prose, but likewise that some of the most interesting parts of the best poems will be found to be strictly the language of prose when prose is well written. The truth of this assertion might be demonstrated by innumerable passages from almost all the poetical writings, even of Milton himself. To illustrate the subject in a general manner, I will here adduce a short composition of Gray, who was at the head of those who, by their reasonings, have attempted to widen the space of separation betwixt Prose and Metrical composition, and was more than any other man curiously elaborate in the structure of his own poetic diction.

"In vain to me the smiling mornings shine,  
And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden fire:  
To break in vain their airy dew-drops join,  
Or cheerful fields resume their green attire.  
These ears, alas! for other notes repine;  
A distant choir doth in my ears retire;  
My heart, by anguish rend'd, no heart but mine;  
And in my breast the imperfect joys expire;  
Yet morning smiles the busy race to cheer,  
And new-born pleasure brings to happier men;  
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear;  
To warm their little loves the birds complain.  
I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear,  
And weep the more because I weep in vain."

It will easily be perceived, that the only part of this Sonnet which is of any value is the lines printed in Italics; it is equally obvious, that, except in the rhyme, and in the use of the single word "fruitless" for fruitlessly, which is so far a defect, the language of these lines does in no respect differ from that of prose.

By the foregoing quotation it has been shown that the language of Prose may yet be well

adapted to Poetry; and it was previously asserted, that a large portion of the language of every good poem can in no respect differ from that of good Prose. We will go further. It may be safely affirmed, that there neither is, nor can be, any *essential* difference between the language of prose and metrical composition. We are fond of tracing the resemblance between Poetry and Painting, and, accordingly, we call them Sisters: but where shall we find bonds of connection sufficiently strict to typify the affinity betwixt metrical and prose composition? They both speak by and to the same organs; the bodies in which both of them are clothed may be said to be of the same substance, their affections are kindred, and almost identical, not necessarily differing even in degree; Poetry<sup>1</sup> sheds no tears "such as Angels weep," but natural and human tears; she can boast of no celestial ichor that distinguishes her vital juices from those of prose; the same human blood circulates through the veins of them both.

If it be affirmed that rhyme and metrical arrangement of themselves constitute a distinction which overturns what has just been said on the strict affinity of metrical language with that of prose, and paves the way for other artificial distinctions which the mind voluntarily admits, I answer that the language of such Poetry as is here recommended is, as far as is possible, a selection of the language really spoken by men; that this selection, wherever it is made with true taste and feeling, will of itself form a distinction far greater than would at first be imagined, and will entirely separate the composition from the vulgarity and meanness of ordinary life; and, if metre be superadded thereto, I believe that a *dissimilitude* will be produced altogether sufficient for the gratification of a rational mind. What other distinction would we have? Whence is it to come? And where is it to exist? Not, surely, where the Poet speaks through the mouths of his characters: it cannot be necessary here, either for elevation of style, or any of its supposed ornaments: for, if the Poet's subject be judiciously chosen, it will naturally, and upon fit occasion, lead him to passions the language of which, if selected truly and judiciously, must necessarily be dignified and variegated, and alive with metaphors and figures. I forbear to speak of an *incongruity* which would shock the intelligent Reader, should the Poet interweave any foreign splendour of his own with that which the passion naturally suggests: it is sufficient to say that such addition is unnecessary. And, surely, it is more probable that those passages, which with propriety abound with metaphors and figures, will have their due effect, if, upon other occasions where the passions are of a milder character, the style also be subdued and temperate.

<sup>1</sup> I here use the word "Poetry" (though against my own judgment) as opposed to the word Prose, and synonymous with metrical composition. But much confusion has been introduced into criticism by this contradistinction of Poetry and Prose, instead of the more philosophical one of Poetry and Matter of Fact, or Science. The only strict antithesis to Prose is Metre: now is this, in truth, a strict antithesis, because lines and measures of metre so naturally occur in writing prose, that it would be scarcely possible to avoid them, even were it desirable.

But, as the pleasure which I hope to give by the Poems now presented to the Reader must depend entirely on just notions upon this subject, and, as it is in itself of high importance to our taste and moral feelings, I cannot content myself with these detached remarks. And if, in what I am about to say, it shall appear to some that my labour is unnecessary, and that I am like a man fighting a battle without enemies, such persons may be reminded, that, whatever be the language outwardly held by men, a practical faith in the opinions which I am wishing to establish is almost unknown. If my conclusions are admitted, and carried as far as they must be carried if admitted at all, our judgments concerning the works of the greatest Poets both ancient and modern will be far different from what they are at present, both when we praise, and when we censure: and our moral feelings influencing and influenced by these judgments will, I believe, be corrected and purified.

Taking up the subject, then, upon general grounds, let me ask, what is meant by the word Poet? What is a Poet? To whom does he address himself? And what language is to be expected from him?—He is a man speaking to men: a man, it is true, endowed with more lively sensibility, more enthusiasm and tenderness, who has a greater knowledge of human nature, and a more comprehensive soul, than are supposed to be common among mankind; a man pleased with his own passions and volitions, and who rejoices more than other men in the spirit of life that is in him; delighting to contemplate similar volitions and passions as manifested in the goings-on of the Universe, and habitually impelled to create them where he does not find them. To these qualities he has added a disposition to be affected more than other men by absent things as if they were present; an ability of conjuring up in himself passions, which are indeed far from being the same as those produced by real events, yet (especially in those parts of the general sympathy which are pleasing and delightful) do more nearly resemble the passions produced by real events, than anything which, from the motions of their own minds merely, other men are accustomed to feel in themselves:—whence, and from practice, he has acquired a greater readiness and power in expressing what he thinks and feels, and especially those thoughts and feelings which, by his own choice, or from the structure of his own mind, arise in him without immediate external excitement.

But whatever portion of this faculty we may suppose even the greatest Poet to possess, there cannot be a doubt that the language which it will suggest to him, must often, in liveliness and truth, fall short of that which is uttered by men in real life, under the actual pressure of those passions, certain shadows of which the Poet thus produces, or feels to be produced, in himself.

However exalted a nation we would wish to cherish of the character of a Poet, it is obvious, that while he describes and imitates passions, his employment is in some degree mechanical, compared with the freedom and power of real and substantial action and suffering. So that it will be the wish of the Poet to bring his feelings near to those of the persons whose feelings he

describes, nay, for short spaces of time, perhaps, to let himself slip into an entire delusion, and even confound and identify his own feelings with theirs; modifying only the language which is thus suggested to him by a consideration that he describes for a particular purpose, that of giving pleasure. Here, then, he will apply the principle of selection which has been already insisted upon. He will depend upon this for removing what would otherwise be painful or disgusting in the passion; he will feel that there is no necessity to trick out or to elevate nature: and, the more industriously he applies this principle, the deeper will be his faith that no words, which his fancy or imagination can suggest, will be to be compared with those which are the emanations of reality and truth.

But it may be said by those who do not object to the general spirit of these remarks, that, as it is impossible for the Poet to produce upon all occasions language as exquisitely fitted for the passion as that which the real passion itself suggests, it is proper that he should consider himself as in the situation of a translator, who does not scruple to substitute excellences of another kind for those which are unattainable by him; and endeavours occasionally to surpass his original, in order to make some amends for the general inferiority to which he feels that he must submit. But this would be to encourage idleness and unmanly despair. Further, it is the language of men who speak of what they do not understand; who talk of Poetry as of a matter of amusement and idle pleasure; who will converse with us as gravely about a *taste* for Poetry, as they express it, as if it were a thing as indifferent as a taste for rope-dancing, or Frontinac or Sherry. Aristotle, I have been told, has said, that Poetry is the most philosophic of all writing: it is so: its object is truth, not individual and local, but general, and operative; not standing upon external testimony, but carried alive into the heart by passion; truth which is its own testimony, which gives competence and confidence to the tribunal to which it appeals, and receives them from the same tribunal. Poetry is the image of man and nature. The obstacles which stand in the way of the fidelity of the Biographer and Historian, and of their consequent utility, are incalculably greater than those which are to be encountered by the Poet who comprehends the dignity of his art. The Poet writes under one restriction only, namely, the necessity of giving immediate pleasure to a human Being possessed of that information which may be expected from him, not as a lawyer, a physician, a mariner, an astronomer, or a natural philosopher, but as a Man. Except this one restriction, there is no object standing between the Poet and the image of things; between this, and the Biographer and Historian, there are a thousand.

Nor let this necessity of producing immediate pleasure be considered as a degradation of the Poet's art. It is far otherwise. It is an acknowledgment of the beauty of the universe, an acknowledgment the more sincere, because not formal, but indirect; it is a task light and easy to him who looks at the world in the spirit of love: further, it is a homage paid to the native and naked dignity of man, to the grand elementary principle of pleasure, by which he

knows, and feels, and lives, and moves. We have no sympathy but what is propagated by pleasure: I would not be misunderstood; but wherever we sympathise with pain, it will be found that the sympathy is produced and carried on by subtle combinations with pleasure. We have no knowledge, that is, no general principles drawn from the contemplation of particular facts, but what has been built up by pleasure, and exists in us by pleasure alone. The Man of science, the Chemist and Mathematician, whatever difficulties and disgusts they may have had to struggle with, know and feel this. However painful may be the objects with which the Anatomist's knowledge is connected, he feels that his knowledge is pleasure; and where he has no pleasure he has no knowledge. What then does the Poet? He considers man and the objects that surround him as acting and re-acting upon each other, so as to produce an infinite complexity of pain and pleasure; he considers man in his own nature and in his ordinary life as contemplating this with a certain quantity of immediate knowledge, with certain convictions, intuitions, and deductions, which from habit acquire the quality of intuitions; he considers him as looking upon this complex scene of ideas and sensations, and finding everywhere objects that immediately excite in him sympathies which, from the necessities of his nature, are accompanied by an overbalance of enjoyment.

To this knowledge which all men carry about with them, and to these sympathies in which, without any other discipline than that of our daily life, we are fitted to take delight, the Poet principally directs his attention. He considers man and nature as essentially adapted to each other, and the mind of man as naturally the mirror of the fairest and most interesting properties of nature. And thus the Poet, prompted by this feeling of pleasure, which accompanies him through the whole course of his studies, converses with general nature, with affections akin to those, which, through labour and length of time, the Man of science has raised up in himself, by conversing with those particular parts of nature which are the objects of his studies. The knowledge both of the Poet and the Man of Science is pleasure; but the knowledge of the one cleaves to us as a necessary part of our existence, our natural and unalienable inheritance; the other is a personal and individual acquisition, slow to come to us, and by no habitual and direct sympathy connecting us with our fellow-beings. The Man of science seeks truth as a remote and unknown benefactor; he cherishes and loves it in his solitude: the Poet, singing a song in which all human beings join with him, rejoices in the presence of truth as our visible friend and hourly companion. Poetry is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge; it is the impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all Science. Emphatically may it be said of the Poet, as Shakespeare hath said of man, "that he looks before and after." He is the rock of defence for human nature; an upholder and preserver, carrying everywhere with him relationship and love. In spite of difference of soil and climate, of language and manners, of laws and customs: in spite of things silently gone out of mind, and things violently destroyed; the Poet binds together by passion

and knowledge the vast empire of human society, as it is spread over the whole earth, and over all time. The objects of the Poet's thoughts, are everywhere; though the eyes and senses of man are, it is true, his two true guides, yet he will follow wheresoever he can find an atmosphere of sensation in which to move his wings. Poetry is the first and last of all knowledge—it is as immortal as the heart of man. If the labours of Men of science should ever create any material revolution, direct or indirect, in our condition, and in the impressions which we habitually receive, the Poet will sleep then no more than at present; he will be ready to follow the steps of the Man of science, not only in those general indirect effects, but he will be at his side, carrying sensation into the midst of the objects of the science itself. The remotest discoveries of the Chemist, the Botanist, or Mineralogist, will be as proper objects of the Poet's art as any upon which it can be employed, if the time should ever come when these things shall be familiar to us, and the relations under which they are contemplated by the followers of these respective sciences shall be justly and properly material to us as enjoying and suffering beings. If the time should ever come when what is now called science, thus familiarised to men, shall be ready to put on, as it were, a form of flesh and blood, the Poet will lend his divine spirit to aid the transfiguration, and will welcome the Being thus produced, as a dear and genuine inmate of the household of man.—It is not, then, to be supposed that any one, who holds that sublime notion of Poetry which I have attempted to convey, will break in upon the sanctity and truth of his pictures by transitory and accidental ornaments, and endeavour to excite admiration of himself by arts, the necessity of which must manifestly depend upon the assumed meanness of his subject.

What has been thus far said applies to Poetry in general; but especially to those parts of composition where the Poet speaks through the mouths of his characters; and upon this point it appears to authorise the conclusion that there are few persons of good sense, who would not allow that the dramatic parts of composition are defective, in proportion as they deviate from the real language of nature, and are coloured by a diction of the Poet's own, either peculiar to him as an individual Poet or belonging simply to Poets in general; to a body of men who, from the circumstance of their compositions being in metre, it is expected will employ a particular language.

It is not, then, in the dramatic parts of composition that we look for this distinction of language; but still it may be proper and necessary where the Poet speaks to us in his own person and character. To this I answer by referring the Reader to the description before given of a Poet. Among the qualities there enumerated as principally conducing to form a Poet, is implied nothing differing in kind from other men, but only in degree. The sum of what was said is, that the Poet is chiefly distinguished from other men by a greater promptness to think and feel without immediate external excitement, and a greater power in expressing such thoughts and feelings as are produced in him in that manner. But these passions and thoughts and feelings are the general passions and thoughts

and feelings of men. And with what are they connected? Undoubtedly with our moral sentiments and animal sensations, and with the causes which excite those; with the operations of the elements, and the appearances of the visible universe; with storm and sunshine, with the revolutions of the seasons, with cold and heat, with loss of friends and kindred, with injuries and resentments, gratitude and hope, with fear and sorrow. These, and the like, are the sensations and objects which the Poet describes, as they are the sensations of other men, and the objects which interest them. The Poet thinks and feels in the spirit of human passions. How, then, can his language differ in any material degree from that of all other men who feel vividly and see clearly? It might be *proved* that it is impossible. But supposing that this were not the case, the Poet might then be allowed to use a peculiar language when expressing his feelings for his own gratification, or that of men like himself. But Poets do not write for Poets alone, but for men. Unless therefore we are advocates for that admiration which subsists upon ignorance, and that pleasure which arises from hearing what we do not understand, the Poet must descend from this supposed height; and, in order to excite rational sympathy, he must express himself as other men express themselves. To this it may be added, that while he is only selecting from the real language of men, or, which amounts to the same thing, composing accurately in the spirit of such selection, he is treading upon safe ground, and we know what we are to expect from him. Our feelings are the same with respect to metre; for, as it may be proper to remind the Reader, the distinction of metre is regular and uniform, and not like that which is produced by what is usually called poetic diction, arbitrary, and subject to infinite caprices upon which no calculation whatever can be made. In the one case, the Reader is utterly at the mercy of the Poet, respecting what imagery or diction he may choose to connect with the passion; whereas, in the other, the metre obeys certain laws, to which the Poet and Reader both willingly submit because they are certain, and because no interference is made by them with the passion, but such as the concurring testimony of ages has shown to heighten and improve the pleasure which co-exists with it.

It will now be proper to answer an obvious question, namely, Why, professing these opinions, have I written in verse? To this, in addition to such answer as is included in what has been already said, I reply, in the first place, Because, however I may have restricted myself, there is still left open to me what confessedly constitutes the most valuable object of all writing, whether in prose or verse; the great and universal passions of men, the most general and interesting of their occupations, and the entire world of nature before me—to supply endless combinations of forms and imagery. Now, supposing for a moment that whatever is interesting in these objects may be as vividly described in prose, why should I be condemned for attempting to superadd to such description the charm which, by the consent of all nations, is acknowledged to exist in metrical language? To this, by such as are yet unconvinced, it may be answered that a very

small part of the pleasure given by Poetry depends upon the metre, and that it is injudicious to write in metre, unless it be accompanied with the other artificial distinctions of style with which metre is usually accompanied, and that, by such deviation, more will be lost from the shock which will thereby be given to the Reader's associations than will be counterbalanced by any pleasure which he can derive from the general power of numbers. In answer to those who still contend for the necessity of accompanying metre with certain appropriate colours of style in order to the accomplishment of its appropriate end, and who also, in my opinion, greatly underrate the power of metre in itself, it might, perhaps, as far as relates to these Volumes, have been almost sufficient to observe, that poems are extant, written upon more humble subjects, and in a still more naked and simple style, which have continued to give pleasure from generation to generation. Now, if nakedness and simplicity be a defect, the fact here mentioned affords a strong presumption that poems somewhat less naked and simple are capable of affording pleasure at the present day; and, what I wished chiefly to attempt, at present, was to justify myself for having written under the impression of this belief.

But various causes might be pointed out why, when the style is manly, and the subject of some importance, words metrically arranged will long continue to impart such a pleasure to mankind as he who proves the extent of that pleasure will be desirous to impart. The end of Poetry is to produce excitement in co-existence with an overbalance of pleasure; but, by the supposition, excitement is an unusual and irregular state of the mind; ideas and feelings do not, in that state, succeed each other in accustomed order. If the words, however, by which this excitement is produced be in themselves powerful, or the images and feelings have an undue proportion of pain connected with them, there is some danger that the excitement may be carried beyond its proper bounds. Now the co-presence of something regular, something to which the mind has been accustomed in various moods and in a less excited state, cannot but have great efficacy in tempering and restraining the passion by an intertexture of ordinary feeling, and of feeling not strictly and necessarily connected with the passion. This is unquestionably true; and hence, though the opinion will at first appear paradoxical, from the tendency of metre to divest language, in a certain degree, of its reality, and thus to throw a sort of half-consciousness of unsubstantial existence over the whole composition, there can be little doubt but that more pathetic situations and sentiments, that is, those which have a greater proportion of pain connected with them, may be endured in metrical composition, especially in rhyme, than in prose. The metre of the old ballads is very artless; yet they contain many passages which would illustrate this opinion; and, I hope, if the following Poems be attentively perused, similar instances will be found in them. This opinion may be further illustrated by appealing to the Reader's own experience of the reluctance with which he comes to the re-perusal of the distressful parts of "Clarissa Harlowe," or the "Gamester," while Shakspeare's writings, in the most pathetic scenes,

never act upon us, as pathetic, beyond the bounds of pleasure—an effect which, in a much greater degree than might at first be imagined, is to be ascribed to small, but continual and regular impulses of pleasurable surprise from the metrical arrangement.—On the other hand (what it must be allowed will much more frequently happen) if the Poet's words should be incommensurate with the passion, and inadequate to raise the Reader to a height of desirable excitement, then, (unless the Poet's choice of his metre has been grossly injudicious) in the feelings of pleasure which the Reader has been accustomed to connect with metre in general, and in the feeling, whether cheerful or melancholy, which he has been accustomed to connect with that particular movement of metre, there will be found something which will greatly contribute to impart passion to the words, and to effect the complex end which the Poet proposes to himself.

If I had undertaken a systematic defence of the theory here maintained, it would have been my duty to develop the various causes upon which the pleasure received from metrical language depends. Among the chief of these causes is to be reckoned a principle which must be well known to those who have made any of the Arts the object of accurate reflection; namely, the pleasure which the mind derives from the perception of similitude in dissimilitude. This principle is the great spring of the activity of our minds, and their chief feeder. From this principle the direction of the sexual appetite, and all the passions connected with it, take their origin: it is the life of our ordinary conversation; and upon the accuracy with which similitude in dissimilitude, and dissimilitude in similitude are perceived, depend our taste and our moral feelings. It would not be a useless employment to apply this principle to the consideration of metre, and to show that metre is hence enabled to afford much pleasure, and to point out in what manner that pleasure is produced. But my limits will not permit me to enter upon this subject, and I must content myself with a general summary.

I have said that poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity: the emotion is contemplated till, by a species of reaction, the tranquillity gradually disappears, and an emotion, kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind. In this most successful composition generally, and in a model similar to this, it is carried out; but the emotion, of whatever kind, and in whatever degree, from various causes, is qualified by various pleasures, so that in describing any passions whatsoever, which are voluntarily described, the mind will, upon the whole, be in a state of enjoyment. If Nature be thus cautious to preserve in a state of enjoyment a being so employed, the Poet ought to profit by the lesson held forth to him, and ought especially to take care, that, whatever passions he communicates to his Reader, these passions, if his Reader's mind be sound and vigorous, should always be accompanied with an overbalance of pleasure. Now the music of harmonious metrical language, the sense of difficulty overcome, and the blind association of pleasure which has been previously

received from works of rhyme or metre of the same or similar construction, an indistinct perception perpetually renewed of language closely resembling that of real life, and yet, in the circumstance of metre, differing from it so widely—all these imperceptibly make up a complex feeling of delight, which is of the most important use in tempering the painful feeling always found intermingled with powerful descriptions of the deeper passions. This effect is always produced in pathetic and impassioned poetry; while, in lighter compositions, the ease and gracefulness with which the Poet manages his numbers are themselves confessedly a principal source of the gratification of the Reader. All that it is necessary to say, however, upon this subject, may be effected by affirming, what few persons will deny, that, of two descriptions, either of passions, manners, or characters, each of them equally well executed, the one in prose and the other in verse, the verse will be read a hundred times where the prose is read once.

Having thus explained a few of my reasons for writing in verse, and why I have chosen subjects from common life, and endeavoured to bring my language near to the real language of men, if I have been too minute in pleading my own cause, I have at the same time been treating a subject of general interest; and for this reason a few words shall be added with reference solely to these particular poems, and to some defects which will probably be found in them. I am sensible that my associations must have sometimes been particular instead of general, and that, consequently, giving to things a false importance, I may have sometimes written upon unworthy subjects; but I am less apprehensive on this account, than that my language may frequently have suffered from those arbitrary connections of feelings and ideas with particular words and phrases, from which no man can altogether protect himself. Hence I have no doubt, that, in some instances, feelings, even of the ludicrous, may be given to my Readers by expressions which appeared to me tender and pathetic. Such faulty expressions, were I convinced they were faulty at present, and that they must necessarily continue to be so, I would willingly take all reasonable pains to correct. But it is dangerous to make these alterations on the simple authority of a few individuals, or even of certain classes of men; for where the understanding of an Author is not convinced, or his feelings altered, this cannot be done without great injury to himself: for his own feelings are his stay and support; and, if he set them aside in one instance, he may be induced to repeat this act till his mind shall lose all confidence in itself, and become utterly debilitated. To this it may be added, that the critic ought never to forget that he is himself exposed to the same errors as the Poet, and, perhaps, in a much greater degree: for there can be no presumption in saying of most readers, that it is not probable they will be so well acquainted with the various stages of meaning through which words have passed, or with the fickleness or stability of the relations of particular ideas to each other; and, above all, since they are so much less interested in the subject, they may decide lightly and carelessly.

Long as the Reader has been detained, I hope he will permit me to caution him against a mode

of false criticism which has been applied to Poetry, in which the language closely resembles that of life and nature. Such verses have been triumphed over in parodies, of which Dr. Johnson's stanza is a fair specimen:—

"I put my hat upon my head  
And walked into the Strand,  
And there I met another man  
Whose hat was in his hand."

Immediately under these lines let us place one of the most justly-admired stanzas of the "Babes in the Wood."

"These pretty Babes with hand in hand  
Went wandering up and down;  
But never more they saw the Man  
Approaching from the Town."

In both these stanzas the words, and the order of the words, in no respect differ from the most unimpassioned conversation. There are words in both, for example, "the Strand," and "the Town," connected with none but the most familiar ideas; yet the one stanza we admit as admirable, and the other as a fair example of the superlatively contemptible. Whence arises this difference? Not from the metre, not from the language, not from the order of the words; but the *matter* expressed in Dr. Johnson's stanza is contemptible. The proper method of treating trivial and simple verses, to which Dr. Johnson's stanza would be a fair parallelism, is not to say, this is a bad kind of poetry, or, this is not poetry; but, this wants sense; it is neither interesting in itself, nor can lead to anything interesting; the images neither originate in that sane state of feeling which arises out of thought, nor can excite thought or feeling in the Reader. This is the only sensible manner of dealing with such verses. Why trouble yourself about the species till you have previously decided upon the genus? Why take pains to prove that an ape is not a Newton, when it is self-evident that he is not a man?

One request I must make of my reader, which is, that in judging these Poems he would decide by his own feelings genuinely, and not by reflection upon what will probably be the judgment of others. How common is it to hear a person say, I myself do not object to this style of composition, or this or that expression, but, to such and such classes of people it will appear mean or ludicrous! This mode of criticism, so destructive of all sound unadulterated judgment, is almost universal: let the Reader then abide, independently, by his own feelings, and, if he finds himself affected, let him not suffer such conjectures to interfere with his pleasure.

If an Author, by any single composition, has impressed us with respect for his talents, it is useful to consider this as affording a presumption, that on other occasions where we have been displeased, he, nevertheless, may not have written ill or absurdly; and further, to give him so much credit for this one composition as may induce us to review what has displeased us, with more care than we should otherwise have bestowed upon it. This is not only an act of justice, but, in our decisions upon poetry especially, may conduce, in a high degree, to the improvement of our own taste; for an accurate taste in poetry, and in all the other arts, as Sir Joshua Reynolds has

observed, is an *acquired* talent, which can only be produced by thought and a long-continued intercourse with the best models of composition. This is mentioned, not with so ridiculous a purpose as to prevent the most inexperienced Reader from judging for himself, (I have already said that I wish him to judge for himself,) but merely to temper the rashness of decision, and to suggest, that, if Poetry be a subject on which much time has not been bestowed, the judgment may be erroneous; and that, in many cases, it necessarily will be so.

Nothing would, I know, have so effectually contributed to further the end which I have in view, as to have shown of what kind the pleasure is, and how that pleasure is produced, which is confessedly produced by metrical composition essentially different from that which I have here endeavoured to recommend: for the Reader will say that he has been pleased by such composition; and what more can be done for him? The power of any art is limited; and he will suspect, that, if it be proposed to furnish him with new friends, that can be only upon condition of his abandoning his old friends. Besides, as I have said, the Reader is himself conscious of the pleasure which he has received from such composition, composition to which he has peculiarly attached the endearing name of Poetry; and all men feel an habitual gratitude, and something of an honourable bigotry, for the objects which have long continued to please them: we not only wish to be pleased, but to be pleased in that particular way

in which we have been accustomed to be pleased. There is in these feelings enough to resist a host of arguments; and I should be the less able to combat them successfully, as I am willing to allow, that, in order entirely to enjoy the Poetry which I am recommending, it would be necessary to give up much of what is ordinarily enjoyed. But, would my limits have permitted me to point out how this pleasure is produced, many mistakes might have been removed, and the Reader assisted in perceiving that the powers of language are not so limited as he may suppose; and that it is possible for poetry to give other enjoyments, of a purer, more lasting, and more exquisite nature. This part of the subject has not been altogether neglected, but it has not been so much my present aim to prove that the interest excited by some other kinds of poetry is less vivid, and less worthy of the nobler powers of the mind, as to offer reasons for presuming, that if my purpose were fulfilled, a species of poetry would be produced, which is genuine poetry; in its nature well adapted to interest mankind permanently, and likewise important in the multiplicity and quality of its moral relations.

From what has been said, and from a perusal of the Poems, the Reader will be able clearly to perceive the object which I had in view: he will determine how far it has been attained; and, what is a much more important question, whether it be worth attaining; and upon the decision of these two questions will rest my claim to the approbation of the Public.

## APPENDIX.

See page 939—"by what is usually called Poetic Diction."

PERHAPS, as I have no right to expect that attentive perusal, without which, confined, as I have been, to the narrow limits of a preface, my meaning cannot be thoroughly understood, I am anxious to give an exact notion of the sense in which the phrase poetic diction has been used; and for this purpose, a few words shall here be added, concerning the origin and characteristics of the phraseology, which I have condemned under that name.

The earliest poets of all nations generally wrote from passion excited by real events; they wrote naturally, and as men: feeling powerfully as they did, their language was daring, and figurative. In succeeding times, Poets, and Men ambitious of the fame of Poets, perceiving the influence of such language, and desirous of producing the same effect without being animated by the same passion, set themselves to a mechanical adoption of these figures of speech, and made use of them, sometimes with propriety, but much more frequently applied them to feelings and thoughts with which they had no natural connection whatsoever. A language was thus insensibly produced, differing materially from the real language of men in *any situation*. The Reader or Hearer of this distorted language found himself in a perturbed and unusual state of mind: when affected by the genuine language of passion he had been in a perturbed and unusual

state of mind also: in both cases he was willing that his common judgment and understanding should be laid asleep, and he had no instinctive and infallible perception of the true to make him reject the false; the one served as a passport for the other. The emotion was in both cases delightful, and no wonder if he confounded the one with the other, and believed them both to be produced by the same, or similar causes. Besides, the Poet spake to him in the character of a man to be looked up to, a man of genius and authority. Thus, and from a variety of other causes, this distorted language was received with admiration; and Poets, it is probable, who had before contented themselves for the most part with misapplying only expressions which at first had been dictated by real passion, carried the abuse still further, and introduced phrases composed apparently in the spirit of the original figurative language of passion, yet altogether of their own invention, and characterised by various degrees of wanton deviation from good sense and nature.

It is indeed true, that the language of the earliest Poets was felt to differ materially from ordinary language, because it was the language of extraordinary occasions; but it was really spoken by men, language which the Poet himself had uttered when he had been affected by the events which he described, or which he had

heard uttered by those around him. To this language it is probable that metre of some sort or other was early superadded. This separated the genuine language of Poetry still further from common life, so that whoever read or heard the poems of these earliest Poets felt himself moved in a way in which he had not been accustomed to be moved in real life, and by causes manifestly different from those which acted upon him in real life. This was the great temptation to all the corruptions which have followed: under the protection of this feeling succeeding Poets constructed a phraseology which had one thing, it is true, in common with the genuine language of poetry, namely, that it was not heard in ordinary conversation; that it was unusual. But the first Poets, as I have said, spake a language which, though unusual, was still the language of men. This circumstance, however, was disregarded by their successors; they found that they could please by easier means: they became proud of modes of expression which they themselves had invented, and which were uttered only by themselves. In process of time metre became a symbol or promise of this unusual language, and whoever took upon him to write in metre, according as he possessed more or less of true poetic genius, introduced less or more of this adulterated phraseology into his compositions, and the true and the false were inseparably interwoven until, the taste of men becoming gradually perverted, this language was received as a natural language: and at length, by the influence of books upon men, did to a certain degree really become so. Abuses of this kind were imported from one nation to another, and with the progress of refinement this diction became daily more and more corrupt, thrusting out of sight the plain humanities of nature by a motley masquerade of tricks, quaintnesses, hieroglyphics, and enigmas.

It would not be uninteresting to point out the causes of the pleasure given by this extravagant and absurd diction. It depends upon a great variety of causes, but upon none, perhaps, more than its influence in impressing a notion of the peculiarity and exaltation of the Poet's character, and in flattering the Reader's self-love by bringing him nearer to a sympathy with that character; an effect which is accomplished by unsettling ordinary habits of thinking, and thus assisting the Reader to approach to that perturbed and dizzy state of mind in which if he does not find himself, he imagines that he is basking of a peculiar enjoyment which poetry can and ought to bestow.

The sonnet quoted from Gray, in the Preface, except the lines printed in Italics, consists of little else but this diction, though not of the worst kind; and indeed, if one may be permitted to say so, it is far too common in the best writers both ancient and modern. Perhaps in no way, by positive example, could more easily be given a notion of what I mean by the phrase *poetic diction* than by referring to a comparison between the metrical paraphrase which we have of passages in the Old and New Testament, and those passages as they exist in our common Translation. See Pope's "Messiah" throughout; Prior's "Did sweeter sounds adorn my flowing tongue," &c. &c. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels," &c. &c. 1st Co-

rinthians, chap. xiii. By way of immediate example take the following of Dr. Johnson:—

"Turn on the prudent Ant thy heedless eyes,  
Observe her labours, Sluggard, and be wise;  
No stern command, no monitor voice,  
Prescribes her duties, or directs her choice;  
Yet, timely provident, she hastes away  
To snatch the blessings of a plentiful day;  
When fruitful Summer loads the teeming plain,  
She crops the harvest, and she stores the grain.  
How long shall sloth usurp thy useless hours,  
Thy time thy vigour, and archery thy powers?  
Why loiterest, sluggard, idling on such tasks,  
And sport solicitation courts repose.  
Amidst the drowsy charms of dull delight,  
Year chases year with unremitted flight,  
Till Want now following, fraudulent and slow,  
Shall spring to seize thee, like an ambush'd foe."

From this hubbub of words pass to the original. "Go to the Ant, thou Sluggard, consider her ways, and be wise: which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O Sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep. So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man." Proverbs, chap. vi.

One more quotation, and I have done. It is from Cowper's Verses supposed to be written by Alexander Selkirk:—

"Religion! what treasure untold  
Resides in that heavenly word!  
More precious than silver and gold,  
Or all that this earth can afford.  
But the sound of the church-going bell  
These valleys and rocks never heard,  
Ne'er sighed at the sound of a knell,  
Or smiled when a sabbath appeared."

"Ye winds, that have made me your sport  
Convey to this desolate shore  
Some cordial endearing report  
Of a land I must visit no more.  
My Friends, do they now and then send  
A wish or a thought after me?  
O tell me I yet have a friend,  
Though a friend I am never to see."

This passage is quoted as an instance of three different styles of composition. The first four lines are poorly expressed; some Critics would call the language prosaic; the fact is, it would be bad prose, so bad, that it is scarcely worse in metre. The epithet "church-going" applied to a bell, and that by so chaste a writer as Cowper, is an instance of the strange abuses which Poets have introduced into their language, till they and their Readers take them as matters of course, if they do not single them out expressly as objects of admiration. The two lines "Ne'er sighed at the sound," &c., are, in my opinion, an instance of the language of passion wrested from its proper use, and, from the mere circumstance of the composition being in metre, applied upon an occasion that does not justify such violent expressions; and I should condemn the passage, though perhaps few Readers will agree with me, as vicious poetic diction. The last stanza is throughout admirably expressed: it would be equally good whether in prose or verse, except that the Reader has an exquisite pleasure in seeing such natural language so naturally connected with metre. The beauty of this stanza tempts me to conclude with a principle which ought never to be lost sight of,

and which has been my chief guide in all I have said, namely, that in works of *imagination and sentiment*, for of these only have I been treating, in proportion as ideas and feelings are valuable, whether the composition be in prose or in verse,

they require and exact one and the same language. Metre is but adventitious to composition, and the phraseology for which that passport is necessary, even where it may be graceful at all, will be little valued by the judicious.

## ESSAY, SUPPLEMENTARY TO THE PREFACE.

WITH the young of both sexes, Poetry is, like love, a passion; but, for the much the greater part of those who have been proud of its power over their minds, a necessity soon arises of breaking the pleasing bondage; or it relaxes of itself;—the thoughts being occupied in domestic cares, or the time engrossed by business. Poetry then becomes only an occasional recreation; while to those whose existence passes away in a course of fashionable pleasure, it is a species of luxurious amusement. In middle and declining age, a scattered number of serious persons resort to poetry, as to religion, for a protection against the pressure of trivial employments, and as a consolation for the afflictions of life. And, lastly, there are many, who, having been enamoured of this art in their youth, have found leisure, after youth was spent, to cultivate general literature; in which poetry has continued to be comprehended *as a study*.

Into the above classes the Readers of poetry may be divided; Critics abound in them all; but from the last only can opinions be collected of absolute value, and worthy to be depended upon, as prophetic of the destiny of a new work. The young, who in nothing can escape delusion, are especially subject to it in their intercourse with Poetry. The cause, not so obvious as the fact is unquestionable, is the same as that from which erroneous judgments in this art, in the minds of men of all ages, chiefly proceed; but upon Youth it operates with peculiar force. The appropriate business of poetry, (which, nevertheless, if genuine, is as permanent as pure science,) her appropriate employment, her privilege and her *duty*, is to treat of things not as they *are*, but as they *appear*; not as they exist in themselves, but as they *seem* to exist to the *senses*, and to the *passions*. What a world of delusion does this acknowledged obligation prepare for the inexperienced! what temptations to go astray are here held forth for them whose thoughts have been little disciplined by the understanding, and whose feelings revolt from the sway of reason!—When a juvenile Reader is in the height of his rapture with some vicious passage, should experience throw in doubts, or common-sense suggest suspicions, a lurking consciousness that the realities of the Muse are but shows, and that her liveliest excitements are raised by transient shocks of conflicting feeling and successive assemblages of contradictory thoughts—is ever at hand to justify extravagance, and to sanction absurdity. But, it may be asked, as these illusions are unavoidable, and, no doubt, eminently useful to the mind as a process, what good can be gained by making observations, the tendency of which is to diminish the confidence of youth in its feelings, and thus to abridge its innocent and even profitable pleasures? The reproach implied in the

question could not be warded off, if Youth were incapable of being delighted with what is truly excellent; or, if these errors always terminated of themselves in due season. But, with the majority, though their force be abated, they continue through life. Moreover, the fire of youth is too vivacious an element to be extinguished or damped by a philosophical remark; and, while there is no danger that what has been said will be injurious or painful to the ardent and the confident, it may prove beneficial to those who, being enthusiastic, are, at the same time, modest and ingenuous. The intimation may unite with their own misgivings to regulate their sensibility, and to bring in, sooner than it would otherwise have arrived, a more discreet and sound judgment.

If it should excite wonder that men of ability, in later life, whose understandings have been rendered acute by practice in affairs, should be so easily, and so far imposed upon when they happen to take up a new work in verse, this appears to be the cause,—that, having discontinued their attention to poetry, whatever progress may have been made in other departments of knowledge, they have not, as to this art, advanced in true discernment beyond the age of youth.\* If, then, a new poem fall in their way, whose attractions are of that kind which would have enraptured them during the heat of youth, the judgment not being improved to a degree that they shall be disgusted, they are dazzled; and prize and cherish the faults for having had power to make the present time vanish before them, and to throw the mind back, as by enchantment, into the happiest season of life. As they read, powers seem to be revived, passions are regenerated, and pleasures restored. The Book was probably taken up after an escape from the burden of business, and with a wish to forget the world, and all its vexations and anxieties. Having obtained this wish, and so much more, it is natural that they should make report as they have felt.

If Men of mature age, through want of practice, be thus easily beguiled into admiration of absurdities, extravagances, and misplaced ornaments, thinking it proper that their understandings should enjoy a holiday, while they are unbending their minds with verse, it may be expected that such Readers will resemble their former selves also in strength of prejudice, and an inaptitude to be moved by the unostentatious beauties of a pure style. In the higher poetry, an enlightened Critic chiefly looks for a reflection of the wisdom of the heart and the grandeur of the imagination. Wherever these appear, simplicity accompanies them; Magnificence herself, when legitimate, depending upon a simplicity of her own, to regulate her ornaments. But it is

a well-known property of human nature, that our estimates are ever governed by comparisons, of which we are conscious with various degrees of distinctness. Is it not, then, inevitable (confining these observations to the effects of style merely) that an eye, accustomed to the glaring hues of diction by which such Readers are caught and excited, will for the most part be rather repelled than attracted by an original Work, the colouring of which is disposed according to a pure and refined scheme of harmony? It is in the fine arts as in the affairs of life, no man can *serve* (i.e. obey with zeal and fidelity) two Masters.

As Poetry is most just to its own divine origin when it administers the comforts and breathes the spirit of religion, they who have learned to perceive this truth, and who betake themselves to reading verse for sacred purposes, must be preserved from numerous illusions to which the two Classes of Readers, whom we have been considering, are liable. But, as the mind grows serious from the weight of life, the range of its passions is contracted accordingly; and its sympathies become so exclusive, that many species of high excellence wholly escape, or but languidly excite, its notice. Besides, men who read from religious or moral inclinations, even when the subject is of that kind which they approve, are beset with misconceptions and mistakes peculiar to themselves. Attaching so much importance to the truths which interest them, they are prone to overrate the Authors by whom those truths are expressed and enforced. They come prepared to impart so much passion to the Poet's language, that they remain unconscious how little, in fact, they receive from it. And, on the other hand, religious faith is to him who holds it so momentous a thing, and error appears to be attended with such tremendous consequences, that, if opinions touching upon religion occur which the Reader condemns, he not only cannot sympathise with them, however animated the expression, but there is, for the most part, an *em* put to all satisfaction and enjoyment. Love, if it before existed, is converted into dislike; and the heart of the Reader is set against the Author and his book.—To these excesses, they, who from their professions ought to be the most guarded against them, are perhaps the most liable; I mean those sects whose religion, being from the calculating understanding, is cold and formal. For when Christianity, the religion of humility, is founded upon the proudest faculty of our nature, what can be expected but contradictions? Accordingly, believers of this cast are at one time contemptuous; at another, being troubled, as they are and must be, with inward misgivings, they are jealous and suspicious;—and at all seasons, they are under temptation to supply by the heat with which they defend their tenets, the animation which is wanting to the constitution of the religion itself.

Faith was given to man that his affections, detached from the treasures of time, might be inclined to settle upon those of eternity;—the elevation of his nature, which this habit produces on earth, being to him a presumptive evidence of a future state of existence; and giving him a title to partake of its holiness. The religious man values what he sees chiefly as an "imperfect shadowing forth" of what he is in-

capable of seeing. The concerns of religion refer to indefinite objects, and are too weighty for the mind to support them without relieving itself by resting a great part of the burthen upon words and symbols. The commerce between Man and his Maker cannot be carried on but by a process where much is represented in little, and the infinite Being accommodates himself to a finite capacity. In all this may be perceived the affinity between religion and poetry; between religion—making up the deficiencies of reason by faith; and poetry—passionate for the instruction of reason; between religion—whose element is infinitude, and whose ultimate trust is the supreme of things, submitting herself to circumscription, and reconciled to substitutions; and poetry—ethereal and transcendent, yet incapable to sustain her existence without sensuous incarnation. In this community of nature may be perceived also the lurking incitements of kindred error;—so that we shall find that no poetry has been more subject to distortion, than that species, the argument and scope of which is religious; and no lovers of the art have gone farther astray than the pious and the devout.

Whither then shall we turn for that union of qualifications which must necessarily exist before the decisions of a critic can be of absolute value? For a mind at once poetical and philosophical; for a critic whose affections are as free and kindly as the spirit of society, and whose understanding is severe as that of dispassionate government? Where are we to look for that initiatory composure of mind which no selfishness can disturb? For a natural sensibility that has been tutored into correctness without losing anything of its quickness; and for active faculties, capable of answering the demands which an Author of original imagination shall make upon them, associated with a judgment that cannot be duped into admiration by aught that is unworthy of it?—among those and those only, who, never having suffered their youthful love of poetry to remit much of its force, have applied to the consideration of the laws of this art the best power of their understandings. At the same time it must be observed—that, as this Class comprehends the only judgments which are trust-worthy, so does it include the most erroneous and perverse. For to be mistaught is worse than to be untaught; and no perverseness equals that which is supported by system, no errors are so difficult to root out as those which the understanding has pledged its credit to uphold. In this Class are contained censors, who, if they be pleased with what is good, are pleased with it only by imperfect glimpses, and upon false principles; who, should they generalise rightly, to a certain point, are sure to suffer for it in the end; who, if they stumble upon a sound rule, are fettered by misapplying it, or by straining it too far; being incapable of perceiving when it ought to yield to one of higher order. In it are found critics too petulant to be passive to a genuine poet, and too feeble to grapple with him; men, who take upon them to report of the course which he holds whom they are utterly unable to accompany,—confounded if he turn quick upon the wing, dismayed if he soar steadily "into the region;"—men of palsied imaginations and indurated hearts; in whose minds all healthy action is languid, who therefore feed as the many direct

them, or, with the many, are greedy after vicious provocatives:—Judges, whose censure is auspicious, and whose praise ominous! In this class meet together the two extremes of best and worst.

The observations presented in the foregoing series are of too ungracious a nature to have been made without reluctance; and, were it only on this account, I would invite the reader to try them by the test of comprehensive experience. If the number of Judges who can be confidently relied upon be in reality so small, it ought to follow that partial notice only, or neglect, perhaps long continued, or attention wholly inadequate to their merits—must have been the fate of most works in the higher departments of poetry; and that, on the other hand, numerous productions have blazed into popularity, and have passed away, leaving scarcely a trace behind them: it will be further found, that when Authors shall have at length raised themselves into general admiration and maintained their ground, errors and prejudices have prevailed concerning their genius and their works, which the few who are conscious of those errors and prejudices would deplore; if they were not recompensed by perceiving that there are select Spirits for whom it is ordained that their fame shall be in the world an existence like that of Virtue, which owes its being to the struggles it makes, and its vigour to the enemies whom it provokes;—a viracious quality, ever doomed to meet with opposition, and still triumphing over it; and, from the nature of its dominion, incapable of being brought to the sad conclusion of Alexander, when he wept that there were no more worlds for him to conquer.

Let us take a hasty retrospect of the poetical literature of this Country for the greater part of the last two centuries, and see if the facts support these inferences.

Who is there that now reads the "Creation" of Dubartas? Yet all Europe once resounded with his praise; he was caressed by kings; and, when his Poem was translated into our language, the "Faery Queen" faded before it. The name of Spenser, whose genius is of a higher order than even that of Ariosto, is at this day scarcely known beyond the limits of the British Isles. And if the value of his works is to be estimated from the attention now paid to them by his countrymen, compared with that which they bestow on those of some other writers, it must be pronounced small indeed.

"The laurel, meed of mighty conquerors  
And poets *eternis*—"

are his own words; but his wisdom has, in this particular, been his worst enemy: while its opposite, whether in the shape of folly or madness, has been *their* best friend. But he was a great power, and bears a high name: the laurel has been awarded to him.

A dramatic Author, if he write for the stage, must adapt himself to the taste of the audience, or they will not endure him; accordingly the mighty genius of Shakspeare was listened to. The people were delighted: but I am not sufficiently versed in stage antiquities to determine whether they did not flock as eagerly to the representation of many pieces of contemporary Authors, wholly undeserving to appear upon the

same boards. Had there been a formal contest for superiority among dramatic writers, that Shakspeare, like his predecessors Sophocles and Euripides, would have often been subject to the mortification of seeing the prize adjudged to sorry competitors, becomes too probable, when we reflect that the admirers of Settle and Shadwell were, in a later age, as numerous, and reckoned as respectable in point of talent, as those of Dryden. At all events, that Shakspeare stooped to accommodate himself to the People, is sufficiently apparent; and one of the most striking proofs of his almost omnipotent genius, is that he could turn to such glorious purpose those materials which the prepossessions of the age compelled him to make use of. Yet even this marvellous skill appears not to have been enough to prevent his rivals from having some advantage over him in public estimation; else how can we account for passages and scenes that exist in his works, unless upon a supposition that some of the grossest of them, a fact which in my own mind I have no doubt of, were foisted in by the Players, for the gratification of the many?

But that his Works, whatever might be their reception upon the stage, made but little impression upon the ruling Intellectuals of the time, may be inferred from the fact that Lord Bacon, in his multifarious writings, nowhere either quotes or alludes to him! His dramatic excellence enabled him to resume possession of the stage after the Restoration; but Dryden tells us that in his time two of the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher were acted for one of Shakspeare's. And so faint and limited was the perception of the poetic beauties of his dramas in the time of Pope, that, in his Edition of the Plays, with a view of rendering to the general reader a necessary service, he printed between inverted commas those passages which he thought most worthy of notice.

At this day, the French Critics have abated nothing of their aversion to this darling of our Nation: "the English, with their bouffon *de* Shakspeare," is as familiar an expression among them as in the time of Voltaire. Baron Grimm is the only French writer who seems to have perceived his infinite superiority to the first names of the French Theatre; an advantage which the Parisian Critic owed to his German blood and German education. The most enlightened Italians, though well acquainted with our language, are wholly incompetent to measure the proportions of Shakspeare. The Germans only, of foreign nations, are approaching towards a knowledge and feeling of what he is. In some respects they have acquired a superiority over the following countrymen of the Poet: for among us it is a current, I might say, an established opinion, that Shakspeare is justly praised when he is pronounced to be "a wild irregular genius, in whom great faults are compensated by great beauties." How long may it be before this miscon-

1 The learned Hakewill (a third edition of whose book bears date 1831), writing to refute the error "*touching Nature's perpetual and universal decay*," cites triumphantly the names of Ariosto, Tasso, Barbas, and Spenser, as instances that poetic genius had not degenerated; but he makes no mention of Shakspeare.

ception passes away, and it becomes universally acknowledged that the judgment of Shakspeare in the selection of his materials, and in the manner in which he has made them, heterogeneous as they often are, constitute a unity of their own, and contribute all to one great end, is not less admirable than his imagination, his invention, and his intuitive knowledge of human Nature.

There is extant a small Volume of miscellaneous poems, in which Shakspeare expresses his own feelings in his own person. It is not difficult to conceive that the Editor, George Steevens, should have been insensible to the beauties of one portion of that Volume, the Sonnets; though in no part of the writings of this Poet is found, in an equal compass, a greater number of exquisite feelings felicitously expressed. But, from regard to the Critic's own credit, he would not have ventured to talk of an act of parliament not being strong enough to compel the perusal of those little pieces, if he had not known that the people of England were ignorant of the treasures contained in them; and if he had not, moreover, shared the too common propensity of human nature to exult over a supposed fall into the mire of a genius whom he had been compelled to regard with admiration, as an inmate of the celestial regions—"there sitting where he durst not soar."

Nine years before the death of Shakspeare, Milton was born; and early in life he published several small poems, which, though on their first appearance they were praised by a few of the judicious, were afterwards neglected to that degree, that Pope in his youth could borrow from them without risk of its being known. Whether these poems are at this day justly appreciated, I will not undertake to decide; nor would it imply a severe reflection upon the mass of readers to suppose the contrary; seeing that a man of the acknowledged genius of Voss, the German poet, could suffer their spirit to evaporate; and could change their character, as is done in the translation made by him of the most popular of those pieces. At all events, it is certain that these Poems of Milton are now much read, and loudly praised; yet were they little heard of till more than 150 years after their publication; and of the Sonnets, Dr. Johnson, as appears from Boswell's Life of him, was in the habit of thinking and speaking as contemptuously as Steevens wrote upon those of Shakspeare.

About the time when the Pindaric odes of Cowley and his imitators, and the productions of that class of curious thinkers whom Dr. Johnson has strangely styled metaphysical Poets, were beginning to lose something of that extravagant admiration which they had excited, the "Paradise Lost" made its appearance. "Fit audience find though few," was the petition addressed by the Poet to his inspiring Muse. I have said elsewhere that he gained more than he asked; this I believe to be true; but Dr. Johnson has fallen into a gross mistake when he attempts

to prove, by the sale of the work, that Milton's Countrymen were "just to it" upon its first appearance. Thirteen hundred Copies were sold in two years; an uncommon example, he asserts, of the prevalence of genius in opposition to so much recent enmity as Milton's public conduct had excited. But, be it remembered that, if Milton's political and religious opinions, and the manner in which he announced them, had raised him many enemies, they had procured him numerous friends; who, as all personal danger was passed away at the time of publication, would be eager to procure the master-work of a man whom they revered, and whom they would be proud of praising. Take, from the number of purchasers, persons of this class, and also those who wished to possess the Poem as a religious work, and but few I fear would be left who sought for it on account of its poetical merits. The demand did not immediately increase; "for," says Dr. Johnson, "many more readers" (he means persons in the habit of reading poetry) "than were supplied at first the Nation did not afford." How careless must a writer be who can make this assertion in the face of so many existing titles to belie it! Turning to my own shelves, I find the folio of Cowley, seventh edition, 1681. A book near it is Flatman's Poems, fourth edition, 1686; Waller, fifth edition, same date. The Poems of Norris of Bemerton not long after went, I believe, through nine editions. What further demand there might be for these works I do not know; but I well remember, that, twenty-five years ago, the booksellers' stalls in London swarmed with the folios of Cowley. This is not mentioned in disparagement of that able writer and amiable man; but merely to show—that, if Milton's work were not more read, it was not because readers did not exist at the time. The early editions of the "Paradise Lost" were printed in a shape which allowed them to be sold at a low price, yet only three thousand copies of the Work were sold in eleven years; and the Nation, says Dr. Johnson, had been satisfied from 1623 to 1664, that is, forty-one years, with only two editions of the Works of Shakspeare; which probably did not together make one thousand Copies; facts adduced by the critic to prove the "paucity of Readers."—There were readers in multitudes; but their money went for other purposes, as their admiration was fixed elsewhere. We are authorised, then, to affirm, that the reception of the "Paradise Lost," and the slow progress of its fame, are proofs as striking as can be desired that the positions which I am attempting to establish are not erroneous<sup>2</sup>.—How amusing to shape to one's self such a critique as a Wit of Charles's days, or a Lord of the Miscellanies or trading Journalists of King William's time, would have brought forth, if he had set his faculties industriously to work upon this Poem, everywhere impregnated with original excellence.

So strange indeed are the obliquities of admiration, that they whose opinions are much influenced by authority will often be tempted to

<sup>1</sup> This flippant insensibility was publicly reprehended by Mr. Coleridge in a course of Lectures upon Poetry given by him at the Royal Institution. For the various merits of thought and language in Shakspeare's Sonnets, see Numbers, 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 47, 48, 105, 107, 108, 109, 111, 112, 114, 116, 117, 129, and many others.

<sup>2</sup> Hughes is express upon this subject: in his dedication of Spenser's Works to Lord Somers, he writes thus. "It was your Lordship's encouraging a beautiful edition of 'Paradise Lost' that first brought that incomparable Poem to be generally known and esteemed."

think that there are no fixed principles<sup>1</sup> in human nature for this art to rest upon. I have been honoured by being permitted to peruse in MS. a tract composed between the period of the Revolution and the close of that century. It is the Work of an English Peer of high accomplishments, its object to form the character and direct the studies of his son. Perhaps nowhere does a more beautiful treatise of the kind exist. The good sense and wisdom of the thoughts, the delicacy of the feelings, and the charm of the style, are, throughout, equally conspicuous. Yet the Author, selecting among the Poets of his own country those whom he deems most worthy of his son's perusal, particularises only Lord Rochester, Sir John Denham, and Cowley. Writing about the same time, Shaftesbury, an author at present unjustly depreciated, describes the English Muses as only yet lisping in their cradles.

The arts by which Pope, soon afterwards, contrived to procure to himself a more general and a higher reputation than perhaps any English Poet ever attained during his life-time, are known to the judicious. And as well known is it to them, that the undue exertion of those arts is the cause why Pope has for some time held a rank in literature, to which, if he had not been seduced by an over-love of immediate popularity, and had confided more in his native genius, he never could have descended. He bewitched the nation by his melody, and dazzled it by his polished style, and was himself blinded by his own success. Having wandered from humanity in his Eclogues with boyish inexperience, the praise, which these compositions obtained, tempted him into a belief that Nature was not to be trusted, at least in pastoral Poetry. To prove this by example, he put his friend Gay upon writing those Eclogues which their author intended to be burlesque. The instigator of the work, and his admirers, could perceive in them nothing but what was ridiculous. Nevertheless, though these Poems contain some detestable passages, the effect, as Dr. Johnson well observes, "of reality and truth became conspicuous even when the intention was to show them grovelling and degraded." The Pastorals, ludicrous to such as prided themselves upon their refinement, in spite of those disgusting passages, "became popular, and were read with delight, as just representations of rural manners and occupations."

Something less than sixty years after the publication of the "Paradise Lost" appeared Thomson's "Winter," which was speedily followed by his other Seasons. It is a work of inspiration; much of it is written from himself, and nobly from himself. How was it received? "It was no sooner read," says one of his contemporary biographers, "than universally admired: those only excepted who had not been used to feel, or to look for anything in poetry, beyond a point of satirical or epigrammatic wit, a smart *anti-theis* richly trimmed with rhyme, or the softness of an elegiac complaint. To such his manly classical spirit could not readily commend itself; till, after a more attentive perusal, they had got

the better of their prejudices, and either acquired or affected a truer taste. A few others stood aloof, merely because they had long before fixed the articles of their poetical creed, and resigned themselves to an absolute despair of ever seeing anything new and original. These were somewhat mortified to find their notions disturbed by the appearance of a poet, who seemed to owe nothing but to nature and his own genius. But, in a short time, the applause became unanimous; every one wondering how so many pictures, and pictures so familiar, should have moved them but faintly to what they felt in his descriptions. His digressions too, the overflowings of a tender benevolent heart, charmed the reader no less; leaving him in doubt, whether he should more admire the Poet or love the Man."

This case appears to bear strongly against us;—but we must distinguish between wonder and legitimate admiration. The subject of the work is the changes produced in the appearances of nature by the revolution of the year: and, by undertaking to write in verse, Thomson pledged himself to treat his subject as became a Poet. Now, it is remarkable that, excepting the nocturnal Reverie of Lady Winchelsea, and a passage or two in the "Windsor Forest" of Pope, the poetry of the period intervening between the publication of the "Paradise Lost" and the "Seasons" does not contain a single new image of external nature; and scarcely presents a familiar one from which it can be inferred that the eye of the Poet had been steadily fixed upon his object, much less that his feelings had urged him to work upon it in the spirit of genuine imagination. To what a low state knowledge of the most obvious and important phenomena had sunk, is evident from the style in which Dryden has executed a description of Night in one of his Tragedies, and Pope his translation of the celebrated moonlight scene in the "Iliad." A blind man, in the habit of attending accurately to descriptions casually dropped from the lips of those around him, might easily depict these appearances with more truth. Dryden's lines are vague, bombastic, and senseless<sup>2</sup>; those of Pope, though he had Homer to guide him, are throughout false and contrivory. The verses of Dryden, once highly celebrated, are forgotten; those of Pope still retain their hold upon public estimation,—nay, there is not a passage of descriptive poetry, which at this day finds so many and such ardent admirers. Strange to think of an enthusiast, as may have been the case with thousands, reciting those verses under the cope of a moonlight sky, without having his raptures in the least disturbed by a suspicion of their absurdity!—If these two distinguished writers could habitually think that the visible universe was of so little consequence to a poet, that it was scarcely necessary for him to cast his eyes upon it, we may be assured that those passages of the older poets which faithfully and poetically describe the phenomena of nature,

2

CORTES alone in a night-dream.

All things are hush'd as Nature's self lay dead,  
The mountains seem to nod their drowsy head.  
The little Birds in dreams their songs repeat,  
And sleeping Flowers beneath the Night-dew sweat:  
Even Lust and Envy sleep; yet Love denies  
Rest to my soul, and slumber to my eyes."

DAVID'S Indian Emperor.

<sup>1</sup> This opinion seems actually to have been entertained by Adam Smith, the worst critic, David Hume not excepted, that Scotland, a soil to which this sort of weed seems natural, has produced.

were not at that time holden in much estimation, and that there was little accurate attention paid to those appearances.

Wonder is the natural product of Ignorance; and as the soil was *in such good condition* at the time of the publication of the "Seasons," the crop was doubtless abundant. Neither individuals nor nations become corrupt all at once, nor are they enlightened in a moment. Thomson was an inspired poet, but he could not work miracles; in cases where the art of seeing had in some degree been learned, the teacher would further the proficiency of his pupils, but he could do little more; though so far does vanity assist men in acts of self-deceit, that many would often fancy they recognized a likeness when they knew nothing of the original. Having shown that much of what his biographer deemed genuine admiration must in fact have been blind wonderment—how is the rest to be accounted for?—Thomson was fortunate in the very title of his poem, which seemed to bring it home to the prepared sympathies of every one: in the next place, notwithstanding his high powers, he writes a vicious style; and his false ornaments are exactly of that kind which would be most likely to strike the undiscerning. He likewise abounds with sentimental common-places, that, from the manner in which they were brought forward, bore an imposing air of novelty. In any well-used copy of the "Seasons" the book generally opens of itself with the rhapsody on love, or with one of the stories (perhaps "Damon and Musidora"); these also are prominent in our collections of Extracts, and are the parts of his Work which, after all, were probably most efficient in first recommending the author to general notice. Pope, repaying praises which he had received, and wishing to extol him to the highest, only styles him "an elegant and philosophical Poet," nor are we able to collect any unquestionable proofs that the true characteristics of Thomson's genius as an imaginative poet were perceived, till the elder Warton, almost forty years after the publication of the "Seasons," pointed them out by a note in his Essay on the "Life and Writings of Pope." In the "Castle of Indolence" (of which Gray speaks so coldly) these characteristics were almost as conspicuously displayed, and in verse more harmonious, and diction more pure. Yet that fine poem was neglected on its appearance, and is at this day the delight only of a few!

When Thomson died, Collins breathed forth his regrets in an Elegiac Poem, in which he pronounces a poetical curse upon him who should regard with insensibility the place where the Poet's remains were deposited. The Poems of the mourner himself have now passed through innumerable editions, and are universally known; but if, when Collins died, the same kind of imprecation had been pronounced by a surviving admirer, small is the number whom it would not have comprehended. The notice which his poems attained during his lifetime was so small,

and of course the sale so insignificant, that not long before his death he deemed it right to repay to the bookseller the sum which he had advanced for them, and threw the edition into the fire.

Next in importance to the "Seasons" of Thomson, though at considerable distance from that work in order of time, come the "Reliques of Ancient English Poetry," collected, new-modelled, and in many instances (if such a contradiction in terms may be used) composed by the Editor, Dr. Percy. This work did not steal silently into the world, as is evident from the number of legendary tales, that appeared not long after its publication; and had been modelled, as the authors persuaded themselves, after the old Ballad. The Compilation was however ill suited to the then existing taste of city society; and Dr. Johnson, 'mid the little senate to which he gave laws, was not sparing in his exertions to make it an object of contempt. The critic triumphed, the legendary imitators were deservedly disregarded, and, as undeservedly, their ill-imitated models sank, in this country, into temporary neglect; while Bürger, and other able writers of Germany, were translating or imitating these Reliques, and composing, with the aid of inspiration thence derived, poems which are the delight of the German nation. Dr. Percy was so abashed by the ridicule flung upon his labours from the ignorance and insensibility of the persons with whom he lived, that, though while he was writing under a mask he had not wanted resolution to follow his genius into the regions of true simplicity and genuine pathos (as is evinced by the exquisite ballad of "Sir Cauline" and by many other pieces), yet when he appeared in his own person and character as a poetical writer, he adopted, as in the tale of the "Hermit of Warkworth," a diction scarcely in any one of its features distinguishable from the vague, the glossy, and unfeeling language of his day. I mention this remarkable fact<sup>2</sup> with regret, esteeming the genius of Dr. Percy in this kind of writing superior to that of any other man by whom in modern times it has been cultivated. That even Bürger (to whom Klopstock gave in my hearing, a commendation which he denied to Goethe and Schiller, pronouncing him to be a genuine poet, and one of the few among the Germans whose works would last) had not the fine sensibility of Percy, might be shown from many passages, in which he has deserted his original only to go astray. For example,

"Now daye was gone, and night was come,  
And all were fast asleepe,  
All save the Lady Emeline,  
Who sate in her bowre to weepe:

"And soon she heard her true Love's voice  
Low whispering at the walle,  
Awake, awake, my dear Ladye,  
'Tis I thy true-love call."

<sup>2</sup> Shenstone, in his "Schoolmistress," gives a still more remarkable instance of this timidity. On its first appearance, (see Dr. Johnson's 2nd Series of the "Curiosities of Literature") the Poem was accompanied with an absurd prose commentary, showing, as indeed some incongruous expressions in the text imply, that the whole was intended for burlesque. In subsequent editions, the commentary was dropped, and the Poem have since continued to read in seriousness, doing for the Author what he had not courage openly to venture upon for himself.

<sup>1</sup> Since these observations upon Thomson were written, I have perused the second edition of his "Seasons," and find that even that does not contain the most striking passages which Warton points out for admiration; these, with other improvements, throughout the whole work, must have been added at a later period.

Which is thus tricked out and dilated :

"Als nun die Nacht Gebrü' und Thal  
Vermummt in Rabenschatten,  
Und die Wälder, Laub und Astall  
Sich in Finsterniss verhalten,  
Und alles in der Nacht so still  
Ist, als wenn das Fährtlein im Meer ist,  
Voll Fieberangst, noch wachet,  
Und seinen Ritter dachtet,  
Der steht, Ein starrer Liebeston  
Hört sich nicht an zu schenken,  
Als, Trübsal hat ihn nicht schon!  
Ist doch die Nacht so still!"

But from humble ballads we must ascend to heroics.

All hail, Macpherson! hail to thee, Sire of Ossian! The Phantom was begotten by the snug embrace of an impudent Highlander upon a cloud of tradition—it travelled southward, where it was greeted with acclamation, and the thin Consistence took its course through Europe, upon the breath of popular applause. The Editor of the "Reliques" had indirectly preferred a claim to the praise of invention, by not concealing that his supplementary labours were considerable! how selfish his conduct, contrasted with that of the disinterested Gael, who, like Lear, gives his kingdom away, and is content to become a pensioner upon his own issue for a beggarly pittance!—Open this far-famed Book!—I have done so at random, and the beginning of the "Epic Poem Temora," in eight Books, presents itself. "The blue waves of Ullin roll in light. The green hills are covered with day. Trees shake their dusky heads in the breeze. Grey torrents pour their noisy streams. Two green hills with aged oaks surround a narrow plain. The blue course of a stream is there. On its banks stood Calbar of Atha. His spear supports the king; the red eyes of his fear are sad. Cormac rises on his soul with all his ghastly wounds." Precious memorandums from the pocket-book of the blind Ossian!

If it be unbecoming, as I acknowledge that for the most part it is, to speak disrespectfully of Works that have enjoyed for a length of time a widely-spread reputation, without at the same time producing irrefragable proofs of their unworthiness, let me be forgiven upon this occasion. —Having had the good fortune to be born and reared in a mountainous country, from my very childhood I have felt the falsehood that pervades the volumes imposed upon the world under the name of Ossian. From what I saw with my own eyes, I knew that the imagery was spurious. In nature everything is distinct, yet nothing defined into absolute independent singleness. In Macpherson's work, it is exactly the reverse; everything (that is not stolen) is in this manner defined, insulated, dislocated, deadened,—yet nothing distinct. It will always be so when words are substituted for things. To say that the characters never could exist, that the manners are impossible, and that a dream has more substance than the whole state of society, as there depicted, is doing nothing more than pronouncing a censure which Macpherson defied: when, with the steps of Morven before his eyes, he could talk so familiarly of his Car-borne heroes—of Morven, which, if one may judge from its appearance at the distance of a few miles, contains scarcely an acre of ground sufficiently accom-

modating for a sledge to be trailed along its surface.—Mr. Malcolm Laing has ably shown that the diction of this pretended translation is a motley assemblage from all quarters: can he be so fond of making our parallel passages so poor? poor Macpherson! to account for his "buts" and his "buts!" and he has weakened his argument by conducting it, as if he thought that every striking resemblance was a *conscious* plagiarism. It is enough that the coincidences are too remarkable for its being probable or possible that they could arise in different minds without communication between them. Now as the Translators of the Bible, and Shakspeare, Milton, and Pope, could not be indebted to Macpherson, it follows that he must have owed his fine feathers to them; unless we are prepared gravely to assert, with Madame de Staël, that many of the characteristic beauties of our most celebrated English Poets are derived from the ancient Paganism; in which case the modern translator would have been but giving back to Ossian his own.—It is consistent that Lucien Buonaparte, who could censure Milton for having introduced Satan in the infernal regions with courtly and regal splendour, should pronounce the modern Ossian to be the glory of Scotland;—a country that has produced a Dunbar, a Buchanan, a Thomson, and a Burns! These opinions are of ill omen for the Epic ambition of him who has given them to the world.

Yet, much as those pretended treasures of antiquity have been admired, they have been wholly unimportant upon the literature of the Country. No succeeding writer appears to have caught from them a ray of inspiration; no author, in the least distinguished, has ventured to imitate their style, except the late Chatterton, on their first appearance. He had perceived, in the success of trials which he himself had made in Germany formerly, how few critics were able to distinguish between a real ancient metal and the counterfeit of modern manufacture; and he set himself to the work of filling a magazine with *Saxon Poems*,—counterparts of those of Ossian, as like his as one of his misty stars is to another. This incapacity to discriminate with the literature of the Island, is, in my estimation, a decisive proof that the book is essentially unnatural; nor should I require any other to demonstrate it to be a forgery, audacious as worthless.—Contrast, in this respect, the effect of Macpherson's publication with the "Reliques" of Percy, so unassuming, so modest in their pretensions!—I have already stated how much Germany is indebted to this latter work; and for our own country, its poetry has been absolutely redeemed by it. I do not think that there is an able writer in verse of the present day who would not be proud to acknowledge his obligations to the "Reliques." I know that it is so with my friends; and, for myself, I am happy in this occasion to make a public avowal of my own.

Dr. Johnson, more fortunate in his country of the labours of Macpherson than those of his modest friend, was solicited not long after to furnish Prefaces biographical and critical for the verses of some of the most eminent English Poets. The bookellers took upon themselves to make the collection; they retained probably to the most popular mediocrities, and, unquestionably,

to their books of accounts; and decided upon the claim of authors to be admitted into a body of the most eminent, from the familiarity of their names with the readers of that day, and by the profits, which, from the sale of his works, each had brought and was bringing to the Trade. The Editor was allowed a limited exercise of discretion, and the Authors whom he recommended were scarcely to be mentioned without a smile. We open the volume of Prefatory Lives, and to our astonishment the first name we find is that of Cowley!—What is become of the morning-star of English Poetry? Where is the bright Elizabethan constellation? Or, if names be more acceptable than images, where is the ever-to-be-honoured Chancer? where is Spenser? where Sidney? and, lastly, where he, whose rights as a poet, contra-distinguished from those which he is universally allowed to possess as a dramatist, we have vindicated,—where Shakspeare?—These, and a multitude of others not unworthy to be placed near them, their contemporaries and successors, we have not. But in their stead, we have (could better be expected when precedence was to be settled by an abstract of reputation at any given period made, as in this case before us?) Roscommon, and Stepney, and Phillips, and Walsh, and Smith, and Duke, and King, and Spratt—Halifax, Granville, Sheffield, Congreve, Broomé, and other reputed Magnates—metrical writers utterly worthless and useless, except for occasions like the present, when their productions are referred to as evidence that a small quantity of brain is necessary to procure a considerable stock of admiration, provided the aspirant will accommodate himself to the likings and fashions of his day.

As I do not mean to bring down this retrospect to our own times, it may with propriety be closed at the era of this distinguished event. From the literature of other ages and countries, proofs equally cogent might have been adduced, that the opinions announced in the former part of this Essay are founded upon truth. It was not an agreeable office, nor a prudent undertaking, to declare them; but their importance seemed to render it a duty. It may still be asked, where lies the particular relation of what has been said to these Volumes?—The question will be easily answered by the discerning Reader who is old enough to remember the taste that prevailed when some of these poems were first published, seventeen years ago; who has also observed to what degree the poetry of this Island has since that period been coloured by them; and who is further aware of the unremitting hostility with which, upon some principle or other, they have each and all been opposed. A sketch of my own notion of the constitution of Faine has been given; and, as far as concerns myself, I have cause to be satisfied. The love, the admiration, the indifference, the slight, the aversion, and even the contempt, with which these Poems have been received, knowing, as I do, the source within my own mind, from which they have proceeded, and the labour and pains, which, when labour and pains appeared needful, have been bestowed upon them, must all, if I think consistently, be received as pledges and tokens, bearing the same general impression, though widely different in value;—they are all proofs that for the present time I have not

laboured in vain; and afford assurances, more or less authentic, that the products of my industry will endure.

If there be one conclusion more forcibly pressed upon us than another by the review which has been given of the fortunes and fate of poetical Works, it is this,—that every author, as far as he is great and at the same time original, has had the task of creating the taste by which he is to be enjoyed: so has it been, so will it continue to be. This remark was long since made to me by the philosophical Friend for the separation of whose poems from my own I have previously expressed my regret. The predecessors of an original Genius of a high order will have smoothed the way for all that he has in common with them;—and much he will have in common; but, for what is peculiarly his own, he will be called upon to clear and often to shape his own road:—he will be in the condition of Hannibal among the Alps.

And where lies the real difficulty of creating that taste by which a truly original poet is to be relished? Is it in breaking the bonds of custom, in overcoming the prejudices of false refinement, and displacing the aversions of inexperience? Or, if he labour for an object which here and elsewhere I have proposed to myself, does it consist in divesting the reader of the pride that induces him to dwell upon those points wherein men differ from each other, to the exclusion of those in which all men are alike, or the same; and in making him ashamed of the vanity that renders him insensible of the appropriate excellence which civil arrangements, less unjust than might appear, and Nature illimitable in her bounty, have conferred on men who may stand below him in the scale of society? Finally, does it lie in establishing that dominion over the spirits of readers by which they are to be humbled and humanised, in order that they may be purified and exalted?

If these ends are to be attained by the mere communication of knowledge, it does not lie here.—TASTE, I would remind the reader, like IMAGINATION, is a word which has been forced to extend its services far beyond the point to which philosophy would have confined them. It is a metaphor, taken from a *passive* sense of the human body, and transferred to things which are in their essence *not* passive,—to intellectual acts and operations. The word, Imagination, has been overstrained, from impulses honourable to mankind, to meet the demands of the faculty which is perhaps the noblest of our nature. In the instance of Taste, the process has been reversed; and from the prevalence of dispositions at once injurious and discreditable, being no other than that selfishness which is the child of apathy,—which, as Nations decline in productive and creative power, makes them value themselves upon a presumed refinement of judging. Poverty of language is the primary cause of the use which we make of the word, Imagination; but the Word, Taste, has been stretched to the sense which it bears in modern Europe by habits of self-conceit, inducing that inversion in the order of things whereby a passive faculty is made paramount among the faculties conversant with the fine arts. Proportion and congruity, the requisite knowledge being supposed, are subjects upon which taste

may be trusted; it is competent to this office;—for in its intercourse with these the mind is *passive*, and is affected painfully or pleasurably as by an instinct. But the profound and the exquisite in feeling, the lofty and universal in thought and imagination; or, in ordinary language, the pathetic and the sublime;—are neither of them, accurately speaking, objects of a faculty which could ever without a sinking in the spirit of Nations have been designated by the metaphor—*Taste*. And why? Because without the exertion of a co-operating power in the mind of the Reader, there can be no adequate sympathy with either of these emotions: without this auxiliary impulse, elevated or profound passion cannot exist.

Passion, it must be observed, is derived from a word which signifies *suffering*; but the connection which suffering has with effort, with exertion, and *action*, is immediate and inseparable. How strikingly is this property of human nature exhibited by the fact, that, in popular language, to be in a passion, is to be angry!—But,

“Anger in happy words or Morn  
Isad, the change of the heart.”

To be moved, then, by a passion, is to be excited, often to external, and always to internal, effort; whether for the continuance and strengthening of the passion, or for its suppression, accordingly as the course which it takes may be painful or pleasurable. If the latter, the soul must contribute to its support, or it never becomes vivid,—and soon languishes, and dies. And this brings us to the point. If every great poet with whose writings men are familiar, in the highest exercise of his genius, before he can be thoroughly enjoyed, has to call forth and to communicate *power*, this service, in a still greater degree, falls upon an original writer, at his first appearance in the world.—Of genius the only proof is, the act of doing well what is worthy to be done, and what was never done before: Of genius, in the fine arts, the only infallible sign is the widening the sphere of human sensibility, for the delight, honour, and benefit of human nature. Genius is the introduction of a new element into the intellectual universe: or, if that be not allowed, it is the application of powers to objects on which they had not before been exercised, or the employment of them in such a manner as to produce effects hitherto unknown. What is all this but an advance, or a conquest, made by the soul of the poet? Is it to be supposed that the reader can make progress of this kind, like an Indian prince or general—stretched on his palanquin, and borne by his slaves? No; he is invigorated and inspired by his leader, in order that he may exert himself; for he cannot proceed in quiescence, he cannot be carried like a dead weight. Therefore to create taste is to call forth and bestow power, of which knowledge is the effect; and *there lies the true difficulty*. \*

As the pathetic participates of an *animal* sensation, it might seem—that, if the springs of this emotion were genuine, all men, possessed of competent knowledge of the facts and circumstances, would be instantaneously affected. And, doubtless, in the works of every true poet will be found passages of that species of excellence,

which is proved by effects immediate and universal. But there are emotions of the pathetic that are simple and direct, and others—that are complex and revolutionary; some—to which the heart yields with gentleness; others—against which it struggles with pride; these varieties are infinite as the combinations of circumstance and the constitutions of character. Remember, also, that the medium through which, in poetry, the heart is to be affected, is language; a thing subject to endless fluctuations and arbitrary associations. The genius of the poet melts these down for his purpose; but they retain their shape and quality to him who is not capable of exerting, within his own mind, a corresponding energy. There is also a meditative, as well as a human, pathos; an enthusiastic, as well as an ordinary, sorrow; a sadness that has its seat in the depths of reason, to which the mind cannot sink gently of itself—but to which it must descend by treading the steps of thought. And for the sublime,—if we consider what are the cares that occupy the passing day, and how remote is the practice and the course of life from the sources of sublimity, in the soul of Man, can it be wondered that there is little existing preparation for a poet charged with a new mission to extend its kingdom, and to augment and spread its enjoyments?

Away, then, with the senseless iteration of the word, *popular*, applied to new works in poetry, as if there were no test of excellence in this first of the fine arts but that all men should run after its productions, as if urged by an appetite, or constrained by a spell!—The qualities of writing best fitted for eager reception are either such as startle the world into attention by their audacity and extravagance; or they are chiefly of a superficial kind, lying upon the surfaces of manners; or arising out of a selection and arrangement of incidents, by which the mind is kept upon the stretch of curiosity, and the fancy amused without the trouble of thought. But in everything which is to send the soul into herself, to be admonished of her weakness, or to be made conscious of her power;—wherever life and nature are described as operated upon by the creative or abstracting virtue of the imagination; wherever the instinctive wisdom of antiquity, and her heroic passions uniting, in the heart of the poet, with the meditative wisdom of later ages, have produced that accord of sublimated humanity, which is at once a history of the remote past and a prophetic enunciation of the remotest future, *there*, the poet must reconcile himself for a season to few and scattered hearers.—Grand thoughts (and Shakspeare must often have sighed over this truth), as they are most naturally and most fitly conceived in solitude, so can they not be brought forth in the midst of plaudits, without some violation of their sanctity. Go to a silent exhibition of the productions of the sister Art, and be convinced that the qualities which dazzle at first sight, and kindle the admiration of the multitude, are essentially different from those by which permanent influence is secured. Let us not shrink from following up these principles as far as they will carry us, and conclude with observing—that there never has been a period, and perhaps never will be, in which vicious poetry, of some kind or other, has not excited more zealous

admiration, and been far more generally read, than good; but this advantage attends the good, that the *individual*, as well as the species, survives from age to age; whereas, of the depraved, though the species be immortal, the individual quickly *perishes*; the object of present admiration vanishes, being supplanted by some other as easily produced; which, though no better, brings with it at least the irritation of novelty,—with adaptation, more or less skilful, to the changing humours of the majority of those who are most at leisure to regard poetical works when they first solicit their attention.

Is it the result of the whole, that, in the opinion of the Writer, the judgment of the People is not to be respected? The thought is most injurious; and, could the charge be brought against him, he would repel it with indignation. The People have already been justified, and their eulogium, pronounced by implication, when it was said, above—that, of good poetry, the *individual*, as well as the species, *survives*. And how does it survive but through the People? What preserves it but their intellect and their wisdom?

“—Past and future, are the wings  
On whose support, harmoniously conjoined,  
Moves the great Spirit of human knowledge—”  
MS.

The voice that issues from this Spirit, is that Vox Populi which the Deity inspires. Foolish must he be who can mistake for this a local acclama-

tion, or a transitory outcry—transitory though it be for years, local though from a Nation. Still more lamentable is his error who can believe that there is anything of divine infallibility in the clamour of that small though loud portion of the community, ever governed by factitious influence, which, under the name of the *Public*, passes itself, upon the unthinking, for the *People*. Towards the *Public*, the Writer hopes that he feels as much deference as it is entitled to: but to the *People*, philosophically characterised, and to the embodied spirit of their knowledge, so far as it exists and moves, at the present, faithfully supported by its two wings, the past and the future, his devout respect, his reverence, is due. He offers it willingly and readily; and, this done, takes leave of his Readers, by assuring them—that, if he were not persuaded that the contents of these Volumes, and the Work to which they are subsidiary, evince something of the “*Vision and the Faculty divine*,” and that, both in words and things, they will operate in their degree, to extend the domain of sensibility for the delight, the honour, and the benefit of human nature, notwithstanding the many happy hours which he has employed in their composition, and the manifold comforts and enjoyments they have procured to him, he would not, if a wish could do it, save them from immediate destruction;—from becoming at this moment, to the world, as a thing that had never been.

1815.

## DEDICATION.

PREFIXED TO THE EDITION OF 1815.

TO SIR GEORGE HOWLAND BEAUMONT, BART.

MY DEAR SIR GEORGE,

Accept my thanks for the permission given me to dedicate these Volumes to you. In addition, to a lively pleasure derived from general considerations, I feel a particular satisfaction; for, by inscribing these Poems with your Name, I seem to myself in some degree to repay, by an appropriate honour, the great obligation which I owe to one part of the Collection—as having been the means of first making us personally known to each other. Upon much of the remainder, also, you have a peculiar claim,—for some of the best pieces were composed under the shade of your own groves, upon the classic ground of Coleorton; where I was animated by the recollection of those illustrious Poets of your name and family, who were born in that neighbourhood; and, we may be assured, did not wander with indifference by the dashing stream of Grace Dieu, and among the rocks that diversify the forest of Charnwood.—Nor is there any one to whom such parts of this Collection as

have been inspired or coloured by the beautiful Country from which I now address you, could be presented with more propriety than to yourself—to whom it has suggested so many admirable pictures. Early in life, the sublimity and beauty of this region excited your admiration; and I know that you are bound to it in mind by a still strengthening attachment.

Wishing and hoping that this Work, with the embellishments it has received from your pencil,<sup>1</sup> may survive as a lasting memorial of a friendship, which I reckon among the blessings of my life,

I have the honour to be,

My dear Sir George,

Yours most affectionately and faithfully,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, WESTMORELAND,

February 1, 1815.

<sup>1</sup> The state of the plates has, for some time, not allowed them to be repeated.

## PREFACE TO THE EDITION OF 1815.

THE powers requisite for the production of poetry are: first, those of Observation and Description,—i.e. the ability to observe with accuracy things as they are in themselves, and with fidelity to describe them, unmodified by any passion or feeling existing in the mind of the describer; whether the things depicted be actually present to the senses, or have a place only in the memory. This power, though indispensable to a Poet, is one which he employs only in submission to necessity, and never for a continuance of time: as its exercise supposes all the higher qualities of the mind to be passive, and in a state of subjection to external objects, much in the same way as a translator or engraver ought to be to his original. 2ndly, Sensibility,—which, the more exquisite it is, the wider will be the range of a poet's perceptions; and the more will he be incited to observe objects, both as they exist in themselves and as re-acted upon by his own mind. (The distinction between poetic and human sensibility has been marked in the character of the Poet delineated in the original preface.) 3rdly, Reflection,—which makes the Poet acquainted with the value of actions, images, thoughts, and feelings; and assists the sensibility in perceiving their connection with each other. 4thly, Imagination and Fancy,—to modify, to create, and to associate. 5thly, Invention,—by which characters are composed out of materials supplied by observation; whether of the Poet's own heart and mind, or of external life and nature; and such incidents and situations produced as are most impressive to the imagination, and most fitted to do justice to the characters, sentiments, and passions, which the Poet undertakes to illustrate. And, lastly, Judgment,—to decide how and where, and in what degree, each of these faculties ought to be exerted; so that the less shall not be sacrificed to the greater; nor the greater, slighting the less, arrogate, to its own injury, more than its due. By judgment, also, is determined what are the laws and appropriate graces of every species of composition.<sup>1</sup>

The materials of Poetry, by these powers collected and produced, are cast, by means of various moulds, into divers forms. The moulds may be enumerated, and the forms specified, in the following order. 1st, The Narrative,—including the Epopeic, the Historic Poem, the Tale, the Romance, the Mock-heroic, and, if the spirit of Homer will tolerate such neighbourhood, that dear production of our days, the metrical Novel. Of this Class, the distinguishing mark is, that the Narrator, however liberally his speaking agents be introduced, is himself the source from which everything primarily flows. Epic Poets, in order

that their mode of composition may accord with the elevation of their subject, represent themselves as *singing* from the inspiration of the Muse, "*Arma virumque cano*:" but this is a fiction, in modern times, of slight value; the "*Iliad*" or the "*Paradise Lost*" would gain little in our estimation by being chanted. The other poets who belong to this class are commonly content to *tell* their tale;—so that of the whole it may be affirmed that they neither require nor reject the accompaniment of music.

2ndly, The Dramatic,—consisting of Tragedy, Historic Drama, Comedy, and Masque, in which the Poet does not appear at all in his own person, and where the whole action is carried on by speech and dialogue of the agents; music being admitted only incidentally and rarely. The Opera may be placed here, inasmuch as it proceeds by dialogue; though depending, to the degree that it does, upon music, it has a strong claim to be ranked with the lyrical. The characteristic and impassioned Epistle, of which Ovid and Pope have given examples, considered as a species of monodrama, may, without impropriety, be placed in this class.

3rdly, The Lyrical,—containing the Hymn, the Ode, the Elegy, the Song, and the Ballad; in all which, for the production of their *full* effect, an accompaniment of music is indispensable.

4thly, The Idyllium,—descriptive chiefly either of the processes and appearances of external nature, as the "*Seasons*" of Thomson; or of characters, manners, and sentiments, as are Shenstone's "*Schoolmistress*," "*The Cotter's Saturday Night*" of Burns, "*The Two Dogs*" of the same Author; or of these in conjunction with the appearances of Nature, as most of the pieces of Theocritus, the "*Allegro*" and "*Penseroso*" of Milton, Beattie's "*Minstrel*," Goldsmith's "*Deserted Village*." The Epitaph, the Inscription, the Sonnet, most of the epistles of poets writing in their own persons, and all loco-descriptive poetry, belong to this class.

5thly, Didactic,—the principal object of which is direct instruction: as the Poem of Lucretius, the "*Georgics*" of Virgil, "*The Fleece*" of Dyer, Mason's "*English Garden*," &c.

And, lastly, philosophical Satire, like that of Horace and Juvenal; personal and occasional Satire rarely comprehending sufficient of the general in the individual to be dignified with the name of poetry.

Out of the three last has been constructed a composite order, of which Young's "*Night Thoughts*," and Cowper's "*Task*," are excellent examples.

It is deducible from the above, that poems, apparently miscellaneous, may with propriety be arranged either with reference to the powers of mind predominant in the production of them; or to the mould in which they are cast; or, lastly, to the subjects to which they relate. From each of these considerations, the following Poems

<sup>1</sup> As sensibility to harmony of numbers, and the power of producing it, are invariably attendant upon the faculties above specified, nothing has been said upon those requisites.

have been divided into classes; which, that the work may more obviously correspond with the course of human life, and for the sake of exhibiting in it the three requisites of a legitimate whole, a beginning, a middle, and an end, have been also arranged, as far as it was possible, according to an order of time, commencing with Childhood, and terminating with Old Age, Death, and Immortality. My guiding wish was, that the small pieces of which these volumes consist, thus discriminated, might be regarded under a two-fold view; as composing an entire work within themselves, and as adjuncts to the philosophical Poem, "The Recluse." This arrangement has long presented itself habitually to my own mind. Nevertheless, I should have preferred to scatter the contents of these volumes at random, if I had been persuaded that, by the plan adopted, anything material would be taken from the natural effect of the pieces, individually, on the mind of the unreflecting Reader. I trust there is a sufficient variety in each class to prevent this; while, for him who reads with reflection, the arrangement will serve as a commentary unostentatiously directing his attention to my purposes, both particular and general. But, as I wish to guard against the possibility of misleading by this classification, it is proper first to remind the Reader, that certain poems are placed according to the powers of mind, in the Author's conception, predominant in the production of them; *predominant*, which implies the exertion of other faculties in less degree. Where there is more imagination than fancy in a poem, it is placed under the head of imagination, and *vice versa*. Both the above classes might without impropriety have been enlarged from that consisting of "Poems founded on the Affections;" as might this latter from those, and from the class "proceeding from Sentiment and Reflection." The most striking characteristics of each piece, mutual illustration, variety, and proportion, have governed me throughout.

None of the other Classes, except those of Fancy and Imagination, require any particular notice. But a remark of general application may be made. All Poets, except the dramatic, have been in the practice of feigning that their works were composed to the music of the harp or lyre: with what degree of affectation this has been done in modern times, I leave to the judicious to determine. For my own part, I have not been disposed to violate probability so far, or to make such a large demand upon the Reader's charity. Some of these pieces are essentially lyrical; and, therefore, cannot have their due force without a supposed musical accompaniment; but, in much the greatest part, as a substitute for the classic lyre or romantic harp, I require nothing more than an animated or impassioned recitation, adapted to the subject. Poems, however humble in their kind, if they be good in that kind, cannot read themselves; the law of long syllable and short must not be so inflexible,—the letter of metre must not be so oppressive to the spirit of versification,—as to deprive the Reader of all voluntary power to modulate, in subordination to the sense, the music of the poem;—in the same manner as his mind is left at liberty, and even summoned, to act upon its thoughts and images. But, though the accompaniment of a musical instrument be frequently dispensed

with, the true Poet does not therefore abandon his privilege distinct from that of the mere Proseman;

"He murmurs near the running brooks  
A music sweeter than their own."

Let us come now to the consideration of the words Fancy and Imagination, as employed in the classification of the following Poems. "A man," says an intelligent author, "has imagination in proportion as he can distinctly copy in idea the impressions of sense: it is the faculty which *images* within the mind the phenomena of sensation. A man has fancy in proportion as he can call up, connect, or associate, at pleasure, those internal images (*παράγειν* is to cause to appear) so as to complete ideal representations of absent objects. Imagination is the power of depicting, and fancy of evoking and combining. The imagination is formed by patient observation; the fancy by a voluntary activity in shifting the scenery of the mind. The more accurate the imagination, the more safely may a painter, or a poet, undertake a delineation, or a description, without the presence of the objects to be characterised. The more versatile the fancy, the more original and striking will be the decorations produced."—*British Synonyms discriminated*, by W. Taylor.

Is not this as if a man should undertake to supply an account of a building, and be so intent upon what he had discovered of the foundation, as to conclude his task without once looking up at the superstructure? Here, as in other instances throughout the volume, the judicious Author's mind is enthralled by Etymology; he takes up the original word as his guide and escort, and too often does not perceive how soon he becomes its prisoner, without liberty to tread in any path but that to which it confines him. It is not easy to find out how imagination, thus explained, differs from distinct remembrance of images; or fancy from quick and vivid recollection of them: each is nothing more than a mode of memory. If the two words bear the above meaning, and no other, what term is left to designate that faculty of which the Poet is "all compact;" he whose eye glances from earth to heaven, whose spiritual attributes body forth what his pen is prompt in turning to shape; or what is left to characterise Fancy, as insinuating herself into the hearts of objects with creative activity?—Imagination, in the sense of the word as giving title to a class of the following Poems, has no reference to images that are merely a faithful copy, existing in the mind, of absent external objects; but is a word of higher import, denoting operations of the mind upon those objects, and processes of creation or of composition, governed by certain fixed laws. I proceed to illustrate my meaning by instances. A parrot *hangs* from the wires of his cage by his beak or by his claws; or a monkey from the bough of a tree by his paws or his tail. Each creature does so literally and actually. In the first Eclogue of Virgil, the shepherd, thinking of the time when he is to take leave of his farm, thus addresses his goats:—

"Non ego vos pectore viridi spectabo in antro  
Dumosa pendens præcedere rupes."

—"half way down  
*Hangs* one who gathers samphire,"

is the well-known expression of Shakespeare, delineating an ordinary image upon the cliffs of Dover. In these two instances is a slight exertion of the faculty which I denominate imagination, in the use of one word: neither the goats nor the samphire-gatherer do literally hang, as does the parrot or the monkey; but, presenting to the senses something of such an appearance, the mind in its activity, for its own gratification, contemplates them as hanging.

"As when far off at sea a boat descried  
Hanging in the clouds, the sailors cry  
The sea-sick's from the wind, and the boat  
is Tossed - Hither, where the merman's lying  
Through the water, they on the ground of sea  
Through the water, they on the ground of sea  
The sea-sick's from the wind, and the boat  
is Tossed - Hither, where the merman's lying

Here is the full strength of the imagination involved in the word *hangs*, and exerted upon the whole image: First, the fleet, an aggregate of many ships, is represented as one mighty person, whose track, we know and feel, is upon the waters; but, taking advantage of its appearance to the senses, the Poet dares to represent it as *hanging in the clouds*, both for the gratification of the mind in contemplating the image itself, and in reference to the motion and appearance of the sublime objects to which it is compared.

From impressions of sight we will pass to those of sound; which, as they must necessarily be of a less definite character, shall be selected from these volumes:

"Over his own sweet voice the Stock-dove broods;"  
of the same bird,

"His voice was *buried* among trees,  
Yet to be come at by the breeze;"  
"O, Cuckoo! shall I call thee *Bird*,  
Or but a wandering Voice?"

The stock-dove is said to *coo*, a sound well imitating the note of the bird; but, by the intervention of the metaphor *broods*, the affections are called in by the imagination to assist in marking the manner in which the bird reiterates and prolongs her soft note, as if herself delighting to listen to it, and participating of a still and quiet satisfaction, like that which may be supposed inseparable from the continuous process of incubation. "His voice was buried among trees," a metaphor expressing the love of *seclusion* by which this Bird is marked; and characterising its note as not partaking of the shrill and the piercing, and therefore more easily deadened by the intervening shade; yet a note so peculiar and withal so pleasing, that the breeze, gifted with that love of the sound which the Poet feels, penetrates the shades in which it is entombed, and conveys it to the ear of the listener.

"Shall I call thee Bird,  
Or but a wandering Voice?"

This concise interrogation characterises the seeming ubiquity of the voice of the cuckoo, and disposes the creature almost of a corporeal existence; the Imagination being tempted to this exertion of her power by a consciousness in the memory that the cuckoo is almost perpetually heard throughout the season of spring, but seldom becomes an object of sight.

Thus far of images independent of each other, and immediately endowed by the mind with properties that do not inhere in them, upon an excitement from properties and qualities the existence of which is inherent and obvious. These processes of imagination are carried on either by conferring additional properties upon an object, or abstracting from it some of those which it actually possesses, and thus enabling it to re-act upon the mind which hath performed the process, like a new existence.

I pass from the Imagination acting upon an individual image to a consideration of the same faculty employed upon images in a conjunction by which they modify each other. The Reader has already had a fine instance before him in the passage quoted from Virgil, where the apparently perilous situation of the goat, hanging upon the shaggy precipice, is contrasted with that of the shepherd contemplating it from the seclusion of the cavern in which he lies stretched at ease and in security. Take these images separately, and how unaffected the picture compared with that produced by their being thus connected with, and opposed to, each other!

"As a huge stone is sometimes seen to lie  
Cuckoo! on the hill-top of an old man's house,  
Who perched upon the top of the hill,  
By a mountain road, and a higher one, and whence,  
So, it seems a thing, and a thing, and a thing,  
In a sea, and a sea, and a sea, and a sea,  
Of rock or sand repose, there to sun himself,

Such a scene is this, and all the time or dead  
And all the time, and all the time, and all the time.

Motionless as a cloud the old Man stood,  
That branch not the load, which they call,  
And motionless as a cloud, the old Man stood.

In these images, the conferring, the abstracting, and the modifying powers of the Imagination, immediately and mediately acting, are all brought into conjunction. The stone is endowed with something of the power of life to approximate it to the sea-beast; and the sea-beast stripped of some of its vital qualities to assimilate it to the stone; which intermediate image is thus treated for the purpose of bringing the original image, that of the stone, to a nearer resemblance to the figure and condition of the aged Man; who is divested of so much of the indications of life and motion as to bring him to the point where the two objects unite and coalesce in just comparison. After what has been said, the image of the cloud need not be commented upon.

Thus far of an endowing or modifying power: but the Imagination also shapes and *creates*; and how? By innumerable processes; and in none does it more delight than in that of consolidating numbers into unity, and dissolving and separating unity into number,—alternations proceeding from, and governed by, a sublime consciousness of the soul in her own mighty and almost divine powers. Recur to the passage already cited from Milton. When the compact Fleet, as one Person, has been introduced "sailing from Bengala," "They," i.e. the "merchants" representing the fleet resolved into a multitude of ships, "ply" their voyage towards the extremities of the earth: "So," (referring to the word "As" in the commencement) "seemed the flying Fiend;" the image of his Person acting to

recombine the multitude of ships into one body,—the point from which the comparison set out. "So seemed," and to whom seemed? To the heavenly Muse who dictates the poem, to the eye of the Poet's mind, and to that of the Reader, present at one moment in the wide Ethiopian, and the next in the solitudes, then first broken in upon, of the infernal regions!

"*Modo me Thebis, modo pōnit Athenis.*"

Hear again this mighty Poet,—speaking of the Messiah going forth to expel from heaven the rebellious angels,

"*Alto del throno del seggio, e del usato Soglio  
Heo cacciato, e in terra del suo regno cacciato.*"—

the retinue of Saints, and the Person of the Messiah himself, lost almost and merged in the splendour of that indefinite abstraction "His coming!"

As I do not mean here to treat this subject further than to throw some light upon the present Volumes, and especially upon one division of them, I shall spare myself and the Reader the trouble of considering the Imagination as it deals with thoughts and sentiments, as it regulates the composition of characters, and determines the course of actions: I will not consider it (more than I have already done by implication) as that power which, in the language of one of my most esteemed Friends, "draws all things to one; which makes things animate or inanimate, beings with their attributes, subjects with their accessories, take one colour and serve to one effect." The grand store-houses of enthusiastic and meditative Imagination, of poetical, as contra-distinguished from human and dramatic Imagination, are the prophetic and lyrical parts of the Holy Scriptures, and the works of Milton; to which I cannot forbear to add those of Spenser. I select these writers in preference to those of ancient Greece and Rome, because the anthropomorphism of the Pagan religion subjected the minds of the greatest poets in those countries too much to the bondage of definite form; from which the Hebrews were preserved by their abhorrence of idolatry. This abhorrence was almost as strong in our great epic Poet, both from circumstances of his life, and from the constitution of his mind. However imbued the surface might be with classical literature, he was a Hebrew in soul; and all things tended in him towards the sublime. Spenser, of a gentler nature, maintained his freedom by aid of his allegorical spirit, at one time inclining him to create persons out of abstractions; and, at another, by a superior effort of genius, to give the universality and permanence of abstractions to his human beings, by means of attributes and emblems that belong to the highest moral truths and the purest sensations,—of which his character of Una is a glorious example. Of the human and dramatic Imagination the works of Shakspeare are an inexhaustible source.

"I tax not you, ye Elements, with unkindness,  
I never gave you kingdoms, call'd you Daughters!"

And if, bearing in mind the many Poets distinguished by this prime quality, whose names I

1 Charles Lamb upon the genius of Hogarth.

omit to mention; yet justified by recollection of the insults which the ignorant, the incapable, and the presumptuous, have heaped upon these and my other writings, I may be permitted to anticipate the judgment of posterity upon myself, I shall declare (consistently, I trust, if the notoriety of the fact above stated does not justify my doing so) I have given in these unfavourable times, evidence of exertions of this faculty upon its worthiest objects, the external universe, the moral and religious sentiments of Man, his natural affections, and his acquired passions; which have the same ennobling tendency as the productions of men, in this kind, worthy to be holden in undying remembrance.

To the mode in which Fancy has already been characterised as the power of evoking and combining, or, as my friend Mr. Coleridge has styled it, "the aggregative and associative power," my objection is only that the definition is too general. To aggregate and to associate, to evoke and to combine, belong as well to the Imagination as to the Fancy; but either the materials evoked and combined are different; or they are brought together under a different law, and for a different purpose. Fancy does not require that the materials which she makes use of should be susceptible of change in their constitution, from her touch; and, where they admit of modification, it is enough for her purpose if it be slight, limited, and evanescent. Directly the reverse of these, are the desires and demands of the Imagination. She recoils from everything but the plastic, the pliant, and the indefinite. She leaves it to Fancy to describe Queen Mab as coming,

"In shape no bigger than an agate-stone  
On the fore-finger of an alderman."

Having to speak of stature, she does not tell you that her gigantic Angel was as tall as Pompey's Pillar; much less that he was twelve cubits, or twelve hundred cubits high; or that his dimensions equalled those of Teneriffe or Atlas;—because these, and if they were a million times as high it would be the same, are bounded: The expression is, "His stature reached the sky!"—the infinite firmament!—When the Imagination frames a comparison, if it does not strike on the first presentation, a sense of the truth of the likeness, from the moment that it is perceived, grows—and continues to grow—upon the mind: the resemblance depending less upon outline of form and feature, than upon expression and effect; less upon casual and outstanding, than upon inherent and internal, properties: moreover, the images invariably modify each other.—The law under which the processes of Fancy are carried on is as capricious as the accidents of things, and the effects are surprising, playful, ludicrous, amusing, tender, or pathetic, as the objects happen to be appositely produced or fortunately combined. Fancy depends upon the rapidity and profusion with which she scatters her thoughts and images; trusting that their number, and the felicity with which they are linked together, will make amends for the want of individual value: or she prides herself upon the curious subtlety and the successful elaboration with which she can detect their lurking affinities. If she can win you over to her purpose, and impart to you her feelings, she cares not how unstable or transitory may be her influence,

knowing that it will not be out of her power to resume it upon an apt occasion. But the Imagination is conscious of an indestructible dominion;—the Soul may fall away from it, not being able to sustain its grandeur; but, if once felt and acknowledged, by no act of any other faculty of the mind can it be relaxed, impaired, or diminished.—Fancy is given to quicken and to beguile the temporal part of our nature, Imagination to incite and to support the eternal.—Yet is it not the less true that Fancy, as she is an active, is also, under her own laws and in her own spirit, a creative faculty. In what manner Fancy ambitiously aims at a rivalry with Imagination, and Imagination stoops to work with the materials of Fancy, might be illustrated from the compositions of all eloquent writers, whether in prose or verse; and chiefly from those of our own Country. Scarcely a page of the impassioned parts of Bishop Taylor's Works can be opened that shall not afford examples.—Referring the Reader to those inestimable volumes, I will content myself with placing a conceit (ascribed to Lord Chesterfield) in contrast with a passage from the "Paradise Lost":—

"The dews of the evening most carefully shun,  
They are the tears of the sky for the loss of the sun."

After the transgression of Adam, Milton, with other appearances of sympathising Nature, thus marks the immediate consequence,

"Sky lowered, and, muttering thunder, some sad drops  
Wept at completion of the mortal sin."

The associating link is the same in each instance: Dew and rain, not distinguishable from the liquid substance of tears, are employed as indications of sorrow. A flash of surprise is the effect in the former case; a flash of surprise, and nothing more; for the nature of things does not sustain the combination. In the latter, the effects from the act, of which there is this immediate consequence and visible sign, are so momentous, that the mind acknowledges the justice and reasonableness of the sympathy in nature so manifested; and the sky weeps drops of water as if with human eyes, as "Earth had before trembled from her entrails, and Nature given a second groan."

Finally, I will refer to Cotton's "Ode upon Winter," an admirable composition, though stained with some peculiarities of the age in which he lived, for a general illustration of the characteristics of Fancy. The middle part of this ode contains a most lively description of the entrance of Winter, with his retinue, as "A palsied king," and yet a military monarch,—advancing for conquest with his army; the several bodies of which, and their arms and equipments, are described with a rapidity of detail, and a profusion of *fantiful* comparisons, which indicate

on the part of the poet extreme activity of intellect, and a correspondent hurry of delightful feeling. Winter retires from the foe into his fortress, where

"—a magazine  
Of sovereign Juice is cellared in;  
Liquor and wine, the soul's sustenance,  
Shall keep their power potent again."

Though myself a water-drinker, I cannot resist the pleasure of transcribing what follows, as an instance still more happy of Fancy employed in the treatment of feeling than, in its preceding passages, the Poem supplies of her management of forms.

"Tis that, that gives the poet rage,  
And thaws the solid blood of face;  
Mutes the young, restores the old,  
And wakes the marrow toward back."

"It lays the careful head to rest,  
Calms palpitations in the breast,  
Renders our lives' misfortune sweet;

"Then let the chill Sirocco blow,  
And gird us round with hills of snow,  
Or else go whistle to the shore,  
And make the hollow mountains roar,

"Whilst we together jovial sit  
Careless, and crowned with mirth and wit,  
Where, though bleak winds centre us home  
Our funnels burn, the world shall roar."

"We'll think of all the Friends we know,  
And drink to all worth drinking to;  
When having drunk all thine and mine,  
We rather shall want healths than wine."

"But where Friends fail us, we'll supply  
Our friendships with our charity;  
Men that remote in sorrows live,  
Shall by our lusty brimmers thrive."

"We'll drink the wanting into wealth,  
And those that languish into health,  
The afflicted into joy; th' oppress  
Into security and rest."

"The worthy in disgrace shall find  
Favour return again more kind,  
And in restraint who stifled lie,  
Shall taste the air of liberty."

"The brave shall triumph in success  
The lover shall have mistresses,  
Poor unregarded Virtue, praise,  
And the neglected Poet, bays."

"Thus shall our healths do others good,  
Whilst we ourselves do all we would;  
For, freed from envy and from care,  
What would we be but what we are?"

When I sat down to write this Preface, it was my intention to have made it more comprehensive; but, thinking that I ought rather to apologise for detaining the reader so long, I will here conclude.

## POSTSCRIPT.

1835.

In the present volume, as in those that have preceded it, the reader will have found occasionally opinions expressed upon the course of public affairs, and feelings given vent to as national interests excited them. Since nothing, I trust, has been uttered but in the spirit of reflective patriotism, those notices are left to produce their own effect; but, among the many objects of general concern, and the changes going forward, which I have glanced at in verse, are some especially affecting the lower orders of society; in reference to these, I wish here to add a few words in plain prose.

Were I conscious of being able to do justice to those important topics, I might avail myself of the periodical press for offering anonymously my thoughts, such as they are, to the world; but I feel that, in procuring attention, they may derive some advantage, however small, from my name, in addition to that of being presented in a less fugitive shape. It is also not impossible that the state of mind which some of the foregoing poems may have produced in the reader, will dispose him to receive more readily the impression which I desire to make, and to admit the conclusions I would establish.

I. The first thing that presses upon my attention is the Poor-Law Amendment Act. I am aware of the magnitude and complexity of the subject, and the unwearied attention which it has received from men of far wider experience than my own; yet I cannot forbear touching upon one point of it, and to this I will confine myself, though not insensible to the objection which may reasonably be brought against treating a portion of this, or any other, great scheme of civil polity separately from the whole. The point to which I wish to draw the reader's attention is, that *all* persons who cannot find employment, or procure wages sufficient to support the body\* in health and strength, are entitled to a maintenance by law.

This dictate of humanity is acknowledged in the Report of the Commissioners; but is there not room for apprehension that some of the regulations of the new act have a tendency to render the principle nugatory by difficulties thrown in the way of applying it? If this be so, persons will not be wanting to show it, by examining the provisions of the act in detail,—an attempt which would be quite out of place here; but it will not, therefore, be deemed unbecoming in one who fears that the prudence of the head may, in framing some of those provisions, have supplanted the wisdom of the heart, to enforce a principle which cannot be violated without infringing upon one of the most precious rights of the English people, and opposing one of the most sacred claims of civilized humanity.

There can be no greater error, in this department of legislation, than the belief that this principle does by necessity operate for the degradation of those who claim, or are so circumstanced as to make it likely they may claim, through laws founded upon it, relief or assistance. The direct contrary is the truth: it may be unanswerably maintained that its tendency is to raise, not to depress; by stamping a value upon life, which can belong to it only where the laws have placed men who are willing to work, and yet cannot find employment, above the necessity of looking for protection against hunger and other natural evils, either to individual and casual charity, to despair and death, or to the breach of law by theft, or violence.

And here, as in the Report of the Commissioners the fundamental principle has been recognised, I am not at issue with them any farther than I am compelled to believe that their "remedial measures" obstruct the application of it more than the interests of society require.

And, calling to mind the doctrines of political economy which are now prevalent, I cannot forbear to enforce the justice of the principle, and to insist upon its salutary operation.

And first for its justice: If self-preservation be the first law of our nature, would not every one in a state of nature be morally justified in taking to himself that which is indispensable to such preservation, where, by so doing, he would not rob another of that which might be equally indispensable to *his* preservation? And if the value of life be regarded in a right point of view, may it not be questioned whether this right of preserving life, at any expense short of endangering the life of another, does not survive man's entering into the social state; whether this right can be surrendered or forfeited, except when it opposes the divine law, upon any supposition of a social compact, or of any convention for the protection of mere rights of property?

But, if it be not safe to touch the abstract question of man's right in a social state to help himself even in the last extremity, may we not still contend for the duty of a christian government, standing *in loco parentis* towards all its subjects, to make such effectual provision, that no one shall be in danger of perishing either through the neglect or harshness of its legislation? Or, waiving this, is it not indisputable that the claim of the state to the allegiance, involves the protection, of the subject? And, as all rights in one party impose a correlative duty upon another, it follows that the right of the state to require the services of its members, even to the jeopardizing of their lives in the common defence, establishes a right in the people (not to be gainsaid by utilitarians and economists) to

public support when, from any cause, they may be unable to support themselves.

Let us now consider the salutary and benign operation of this principle. Here we must have recourse to elementary feelings of human nature, and to truths which from their very obviousness are apt to be slighted, till they are forced upon our notice by our own sufferings or those of others. In the "Paradise Lost," Milton represents Adam, after the Fall, as exclaiming, in the anguish of his soul—

"What if I should be left Mifer, from my day  
To languish on, and I should Thee  
I should be left Mifer, from my day  
To languish on, and I should Thee  
Concurred not to my being."

Under how many various pressures of misery have men been driven thus, in a strain touching upon impiety, to expostulate with the Creator! and under few so sensitive as when the source and origin of earthly existence have been brought back to the mind by its impending close in the pangs of destitution. But as long as, in our legislation, due weight shall be given to this principle, no man will be forced to bewail the gift of life in hopeless want of the necessities of life.

Englishmen have, therefore, by the progress of civilisation among them, been placed in circumstances more favourable to piety and resignation to the divine will, than the inhabitants of other countries, where a like provision has not been established. And as Providence, in this care of our countrymen, acts through a human medium, the objects of that care must, in like manner, be more inclined towards a grateful love of their fellow-men. Thus, also, do stronger ties attach the people to their country, whether while they tread its soil, or, at a distance, think of their native land as an indulgent parent, to whose arms, even they who have been imprudent and underserving may, like the prodigal son, betake themselves, without fear of being rejected.

Such is the view of the case that would first present itself to a reflective mind; and it is in vain to show, by appeals to experience, in contrast with this view, that provisions founded upon the principle have promoted profaneness of life, and dispositions the reverse of philanthropic, by spreading idleness, selfishness, and rapacity: for these evils have arisen, not as an inevitable consequence of the principle, but for want of judgment in framing laws based upon it; and, above all, from faults in the mode of administering the law. The mischief that has grown to such a height from granting relief in cases where proper vigilance would have shown that it was not required, or in bestowing it in undue measure, will be urged by no truly enlightened statesman, as a sufficient reason for banishing the principle itself from legislation.

Let us recur to the miserable states of consciousness that it precludes.

There is a story told, by a traveller in Spain, of a female who, by a sudden shock of domestic calamity, was driven out of her senses, and ever after looked up incessantly to the sky, feeling that her fellow-creatures could do nothing for her relief. Can there be Englishmen who, with a good end in view, would, upon system, expose their brother Englishmen to a like necessity of looking upwards only; or downwards to the

earth, after it shall contain no spot where the destitute can demand, by civil right, what by right of nature they are entitled to?

Suppose the objects of our sympathy not sunk into this blank despair, but wandering about as strangers in streets and ways, with the hope of succour from casual charity; what have we gained by such a change of scene? Woeful is the condition of the furnished Northern Indian, dependent, among winter snows, upon the chance passage of a herd of deer, from which one, if brought down by his rifle-gun, may be made the means of keeping him and his companions alive. As miserable is that of some savage Islander, who, when the land has ceased to afford him sustenance, watches for food which the waves may cast up, or in vain endeavours to extract it from the inexorable deep. But neither of these is in a state of wretchedness comparable to that, which is so often endured in civilised society: multitudes, in all ages, have known it, of whom may be said:—

"Homeless, near a thousand homes they stood,  
And near a thousand throes pined, and wanted food."

Justly might I be accused of wasting time in an uncalculated attempt to excite the feelings of the reader, if systems of political economy, widely spread, did not impugn the principle, and if the safeguards against such extremities were left unimpaired. It is broadly asserted by many, that every man who endeavours to find work *may* find it: were this assertion capable of being verified, there still would remain a question, what kind of work, and how far may the labourer be fit for it? For if sedentary work is to be exchanged for standing; and some light and nice exercise of the fingers, to which an artisan has been accustomed all his life, for severe labour of the arms; the best efforts would turn to little account, and occasion would be given for the unthinking and the unfeeling unwarrantably to reproach those who are put upon such employment, as idle, froward, and unworthy of relief, either by law or in any other way! Were this statement correct, there would indeed be an end of the argument, the principle here maintained would be superseded. But, alas! it is far otherwise. That principle, applicable to the benefit of all countries, is indispensable for England, upon whose coast families are perpetually deprived of their support by shipwreck, and where large masses of men are so liable to be thrown out of their ordinary means of gaining bread, by changes in commercial intercourse, subject mainly or solely to the will of foreign powers; by new discoveries in arts and manufactures; and by reckless laws, in conformity with theories of political economy, which, whether right or wrong in the abstract, have proved a scourge to tens of thousands, by the abruptness with which they have been carried into practice.

But it is urged,—refuse altogether compulsory relief to the able-bodied, and the number of those who stand in need of relief will steadily diminish through a conviction of an absolute necessity for greater forethought, and more prudent care of a man's earnings. Undoubtedly it would, but so also would it, and in a much greater degree, if the legislative provisions were retained, and parochial relief administered under the care of the upper classes, as it ought to be. For it has been

invariably found, that wherever the funds have been raised and applied under the superintendence of gentlemen and substantial proprietors, acting in vestries, and as overseers, pauperism has diminished accordingly. Proper care in that quarter would effectually check what is felt in some districts to be one of the worst evils in the poor law system, viz. the readiness of small and needy proprietors to join in imposing rates that seemingly subject them to great hardships, while, in fact, this is done with a mutual understanding, that the relief each is ready to bestow upon his still poorer neighbours will be granted to himself, or his relatives, should it hereafter be applied for.

But let us look to inner sentiments of a nobler quality, in order to know what we have to build upon. Affecting proofs occur in every one's experience, who is acquainted with the unfortunate and the indigent, of their unwillingness to derive their subsistence from aught but their own funds or labour, or to be indebted to parochial assistance for the attainment of any object, however dear to them. A case was reported, the other day, from a coroner's inquest, of a pair who, through the space of four years, had carried about their dead infant from house to house, and from lodging to lodging, as their necessities drove them, rather than ask the parish to bear the expense of its interment:—the poor creatures lived in the hope of one day being able to bury their child at their own cost. It must have been heart-rending to see and hear the mother, who had been called upon to account for the state in which the body was found, make this deposition. By some, judging coldly, if not harshly, this conduct might be imputed to an unwarrantable pride, as she and her husband had, it is true, been once in prosperity. But examples, where the spirit of independence works with equal strength, though not with like miserable accompaniments, are frequently to be found even yet among the humblest peasantry and mechanics. There is not, then, sufficient cause for doubting that a like sense of honour may be revived among the people, and their ancient habits of independence restored, without resorting to those severities which the new Poor Law Act has introduced.

But even if the surfaces of things only are to be examined, we have a right to expect that lawgivers should take into account the various tempers and dispositions of mankind: while some are led, by the existence of a legislative provision, into idleness and extravagance, the economical virtues might be cherished in others by the knowledge that, if all their efforts fail, they have in the Poor Laws a "refuge from the storm and a shadow from the heat." Despondency and distraction are no friends to prudence: the springs of industry will relax, if cheerfulness be destroyed by anxiety; without hope men become reckless and have a sullen pride in adding to the heap of their own wretchedness. He who feels that he is abandoned by his fellow-men will be almost irresistibly driven to care little for himself; will lose his self-respect accordingly, and with that loss what remains to him of virtue?

With all due deference to the particular experience, and general intelligence of the individuals who framed the Act, and of those who in and out of parliament have approved of and supported it; it may be said, that it proceeds too much upon

the presumption that it is a labouring man's own fault if he be not, as the phrase is, beforehand with the world. But the most prudent are liable to be thrown back by sickness, cutting them off from labour, and causing to them expense: and who but has observed how distress creeps upon multitudes without misconduct of their own; and merely from a gradual fall in the price of labour, without a correspondent one in the price of provisions; so that men who may have ventured upon the marriage state with a fair prospect of maintaining their families in comfort and happiness, see them reduced to a pittance which no effort of theirs can increase? Let it be remembered, also, that there are thousands with whom vicious habits of expense are not the cause why they do not store up their gains; but they are generous and kind-hearted, and ready to help their kindred and friends; moreover, they have a faith in Providence that those who have been prompt to assist others, will not be left destitute, should they themselves come to need. By acting from these blended feelings, numbers have rendered themselves incapable of standing up against a sudden reverse. Nevertheless, these men, in common with all who have the misfortune to be in want, if many theorists had their wish, would be thrown upon one or other of those three sharp points of condition before adverted to, from which the intervention of law has hitherto saved them.

All that has been said tends to show how the principle contended for makes the gift of life more valuable, and has, it may be hoped, led to the conclusion that its legitimate operation is to make men worthy of that gift: in other words, not to degrade but to exalt human nature. But the subject must not be dismissed without advertent to the indirect influence of the same principle upon the moral sentiments of a people among whom it is embodied in law. In our criminal jurisprudence there is a maxim, deservedly eulogised, that it is better that ten guilty persons should escape, than that one innocent man should suffer; so, also, might it be maintained, with regard to the Poor Laws, that it is better for the interests of humanity among the people at large, that ten undeserving should partake of the funds provided, than that one morally good man, through want of relief, should either have his principles corrupted, or his energies destroyed; than that such a one should either be driven to do wrong, or be cast to the earth in utter hopelessness. In France, the English maxim of criminal jurisprudence is reversed; there, it is deemed better that ten innocent men should suffer, than one guilty escape: in France, there is no universal provision for the poor; and we may judge of the small value set upon human life in the metropolis of that country, by merely noticing the disrespect with which, after death, the body is treated, not by the thoughtless vulgar, but in schools of anatomy, presided over by men allowed to be, in their own art and in physical science, among the most enlightened in the world. In the East, where countries are overrun with population as with a weed, infinitely more respect is shown to the remains of the deceased; and what a bitter mockery is it, that this insensibility should be found where civil polity is so busy in minor regulations, and ostentatiously careful to gratify the luxurious propensities,

whether social or intellectual, of the multitude! Irreligion is, no doubt, much concerned with this offensive disrespect, shown to the bodies of the dead in France; but it is mainly attributable to the state in which so many of the living are left by the absence of compulsory provision for the indigent so humanely established by the law of England.

Sights of abject misery, perpetually recurring, harden the heart of the community. In the perusal of history, and of works of fiction, we are not, indeed, unwilling to have our commiseration excited by such objects of distress as they present to us; but, in the concerns of real life, men know that such emotions are not given to be indulged for their own sakes: there, the conscience declares to them that sympathy must be followed by action; and if there exist a previous conviction that the power to relieve is utterly inadequate to the demand, the eye shrinks from communication with wretchedness, and pity and compassion languish, like any other qualities that are deprived of their natural aliment. Let these considerations be duly weighed by those who trust to the hope that an increase of private charity, with all its advantages of superior discrimination, would more than compensate for the abandonment of those principles, the wisdom of which has been here insisted upon. How discouraging, also, would be the sense of injustice, which could not fail to arise in the minds of the well-disposed, if the burden of supporting the poor, a burden of which the selfish have hitherto by compulsion borne a share, should now, or hereafter, be thrown exclusively upon the benevolent.

By having put an end to the Slave Trade and Slavery, the British people are exalted in the scale of humanity; and they cannot but feel so, if they look into themselves, and duly consider their relation to God and their fellow-creatures. That was a noble advance; but a retrograde movement will assuredly be made, if ever the principle, which has been here defended, should be either avowedly abandoned or but ostensibly retained.

But after all, there may be little reason to apprehend permanent injury from any experiment that may be tried. On the one side will be human nature rising up in her own defence, and on the other prudential selfishness acting to the same purpose, from a conviction that, without a compulsory provision for the exigencies of the labouring multitude, that degree of ability to regulate the price of labour, which is indispensable for the reasonable interest of arts and manufactures, cannot, in Great Britain, be upheld.

II. In a poem of the foregoing collection, allusion is made to the state of the workmen congregated in manufactories. In order to relieve many of the evils to which that class of society are subject and to establish a better harmony between them and their employers, it would be well to repeal such laws as prevent the formation of joint-stock companies. There are, no doubt, many and great obstacles to the formation and salutary working of these societies, inherent in the mind of those whom they would obviously benefit. But the combinations of masters to keep down, unjustly, the price of labour would

be fairly checked by them, as far as they were practicable; they would encourage economy, inasmuch as they would enable a man to draw profit from his savings, by investing them in buildings or machinery for processes of manufacture with which he was habitually connected. His little capital would then be working for him while he was at rest or asleep; he would more clearly perceive the necessity of capital for carrying on great works; he would better learn to respect the larger portions of it in the hands of others; he would be less tempted to join in unjust combinations; and, for the sake of his own property, if not for higher reasons, he would be slow to promote local disturbance, or endanger public tranquillity; he would, at least, be loth to act in that way *knowingly*: for it is not to be denied that such societies might be nurseries of opinions unfavourable to a mixed constitution of government, like that of Great Britain. The democratic and republican spirit which they might be apt to foster would not, however, be dangerous in itself, but only as it might act without being sufficiently counterbalanced, either by landed proprietorship, or by a Church extending itself so as to embrace an ever-growing and ever-increasing population of mechanics and artisans. But if the tendencies of such societies would be to make the men prosper who might belong to them, rulers and legislators should rejoice in the result, and do their duty to the state by upholding and extending the influence of that Church to which it owes, in so great a measure, its safety, its prosperity, and its glory.

This, in the temper of the present times, may be difficult, but it is become indispensable, since large towns in great numbers have sprung up, and others have increased tenfold, with little or no dependence upon the gentry and the landed proprietors; and apart from those mitigated feudal institutions, which, till of late, have acted so powerfully upon the composition of the House of Commons. Now it may be affirmed that, in quarters where there is not an attachment to the Church, or the landed aristocracy, and a pride in supporting them, *there* the people will dislike both, and be ready, upon such incitements as are perpetually recurring, to join in attempts to overthrow them. There is no neutral ground here: from want of due attention to the state of society in large towns and manufacturing districts, and ignorance or disregard of these obvious truths, innumerable well-meaning persons became zealous supporters of a Reform Bill, the qualities and powers of which, whether destructive or constructive, they would otherwise have been afraid of; and even the framers of that bill, swayed as they might be by party resentments and personal ambition, could not have gone so far, had not they too been lamentably ignorant or neglectful of the same truths both of fact and philosophy.

But let that pass; and let no opponent of the bill be tempted to compliment his own foresight, by exaggerating the mischiefs and dangers that have sprung from it: let not time be wasted in fruitless regrets; and let those party distinctions vanish to their very names that have separated men who, whatever course they may have pursued, have ever had a bond of union in the wish to save the limited monarchy, and those other institutions that have, under Providence, rendered

for so long a period of time this country the happiest and worthiest of which there is any record since the foundation of civil society.

III. A philosophic mind is best pleased when looking at religion in its spiritual bearing; as a guide of conduct, a solace under affliction, and a support amid the instabilities of mortal life: but the Church having been forcibly brought by political considerations to my notice, while treating of the labouring classes, I cannot forbear saying a few words upon that momentous topic.

There is a loud clamour for extensive change in that department. The clamour would be entitled to more respect if they who are the most eager to swell it with their voices were not generally the most ignorant of the real state of the Church, and the service it renders to the community. *Reform* is the word employed. Let us pause and consider what sense it is apt to carry, and how things are confounded by a lax use of it. The great religious Reformation, in the sixteenth century, did not profess to be a new construction, but a restoration of something fallen into decay, or put out of sight. That familiar and justifiable use of the word seems to have paved the way for fallacies with respect to the term reform, which it is difficult to escape from. Were we to speak of improvement, and the correction of abuses, we should run less risk of being deceived ourselves, or of misleading others. We should be less likely to fall blindly into the belief, that the change demanded is a renewal of something that has existed before, and that, therefore, we have experience on our side; nor should we be equally tempted to beg the question, that the change for which we are eager must be advantageous. From generation to generation, men are the dupes of words; and it is painful to observe, that so many of our species are most tenacious of those opinions which they have formed with the least consideration. They who are the readiest to meddle with public affairs, whether in church or state, fly to generalities, that they may be eased from the trouble of thinking about particulars; and thus is deputed to mechanical instrumentality the work which vital knowledge only can do well.

"Abolish pluralities, have a resident incumbent in every parish," is a favourite cry; but, without advertent to other obstacles in the way of this specious scheme, it may be asked what benefit would accrue from its indiscriminate adoption to counterbalance the harm it would introduce, by nearly extinguishing the order of curates, unless the revenues of the church should grow with the population, and be greatly increased in many thinly peopled districts, especially among the parishes of the North.

The order of curates is so beneficial, that some particular notice of it seems to be required in this place. For a church poor as, relatively to the numbers of people, that of England is, and probably will continue to be, it is no small advantage to have youthful servants, who will work upon the wages of hope and expectation. Still more advantageous is it to have, by means of this order, young men scattered over the country, who being more detached from the temporal concerns of the benefice, have more leisure for improvement and study, and are less subject to be brought into secular collision with those who

are under their spiritual guardianship. The curate, if he reside at a distance from the incumbent, undertakes the requisite responsibilities of a temporal kind, in that modified way which prevents him, as a new-comer, from being charged with selfishness: while it prepares him for entering upon a benefice of his own, with something of a suitable experience. If he should act under and in co-operation with a resident incumbent, the gain is mutual. His studies will probably be assisted; and his training, managed by a superior, will not be liable to relapse in matters of prudence, seemliness, or in any of the highest cares of his functions; and by way of return for these benefits to the pupil, it will often happen that the zeal of a middle-aged or declining incumbent will be revived, by being in near communion with the ardour of youth, when his own efforts may have languished through a melancholy consciousness that they have not produced as much good among his flock as, when he first entered upon the charge, he fondly hoped.

Let one remark, and that not the least important, be added. A curate, entering for the first time upon his office, comes from college after a course of expense, and with such inexperience in the use of money, that, in his new situation, he is apt to fall unawares into pecuniary difficulties. If this happens to him, much more likely is it to happen to the youthful incumbent; whose relations, to his parishioners and to society, are more complicated; and, his income being larger and independent of another, a costlier style of living is required of him by public opinion. If embarrassment should ensue, and with that unavoidably some loss of respectability, his future usefulness will be proportionably impaired: not so with the curate, for he can easily remove and start afresh with a stock of experience and an unblemished reputation; whereas the early indiscretions of an incumbent being rarely forgotten, may be impediments to the efficacy of his ministry for the remainder of his life. The same observations would apply with equal force to doctrine. A young minister is liable to errors, from his notions being either too lax or overstrained. In both cases it would prove injurious that the error should be remembered, after study and reflection, with advancing years, shall have brought him to a clearer discernment of the truth, and better judgment in the application of it.

It must be acknowledged that, among the regulations of ecclesiastical polity, none at first view are more attractive than that which prescribes for every parish a resident incumbent. How agreeable to picture to one's self, as has been done by poets and romance-writers, from Chaucer down to Goldsmith, a man devoted to his ministerial office, with not a wish or a thought ranging beyond the circuit of its cares! Nor is it in poetry and fiction only that such characters are found; they are scattered, it is hoped not sparingly, over real life, especially in sequestered and rural districts, where there is but small influx of new inhabitants, and little change of occupation. The spirit of the Gospel, unalloyed by acquisitions of profane learning and experience in the world,—that spirit, and the obligations of the sacred office may, in such situations, suffice to effect most of what is needful. But for the

complex state of society that prevails in England, much more is required, both in large towns, and in many extensive districts of the country. A minister there should not only be irreproachable in manners and morals, but accomplished in learning, as far as is possible without sacrifice of the least of his pastoral duties. As necessary, perhaps more so, is it that he should be a citizen as well as a scholar; thoroughly acquainted with the structure of society, and the constitution of civil government, and able to reason upon both with the most expert; all ultimately in order to support the truths of Christianity, and to diffuse its blessings.

A young man coming fresh from the place of his education, cannot have brought with him these accomplishments; and if the scheme of equalising church incomes, which many advisers are much bent upon, be realised, so that there should be little or no secular inducement for a clergyman to desire a removal from the spot where he may chance to have been first set down; surely not only opportunities for obtaining the requisite qualifications would be diminished, but the motives for desiring to obtain them would be proportionably weakened. And yet these qualifications are indispensable for the diffusion of that knowledge, by which alone the political philosophy of the New Testament can be rightly expounded, and its precepts adequately enforced. In these times, when the press is daily exercising so great a power over the minds of the people, for wrong or for right as may happen, *that* preacher ranks among the first of benefactors who, without stooping to the direct treatment of current politics and passing events, can furnish infallible guidance through the delusions that surround them; and who, appealing to the sanctions of Scripture, may place the grounds of its injunctions in so clear a light, that disaffection shall cease to be cultivated as a laudable propensity, and loyalty cleansed from the dishonour of a blind and prostrate obedience.

It is not, however, in regard to civic duties alone, that this knowledge in a minister of the Gospel is important; it is still more so for softening and subduing private and personal discontents. In all places, and at all times, men have gratuitously troubled themselves, because their survey of the dispensations of Providence has been partial and narrow; but now that readers are so greatly multiplied, men judge as they are *taught*, and reprimands are engendered everywhere, by imputations being cast upon the government; and are prolonged or aggravated by being ascribed to misconduct or injustice in rulers, when the individual himself only is in fault. If a Christian pastor be competent to deal with these humours, as they may be dealt with, and by no members of society so successfully, both from more frequent and more favourable opportunities of intercourse, and by aid of the authority with which he speaks; he will be a teacher of moderation, a dispenser of the wisdom that blunts approaching distress by submission to God's will, and lightens, by patience, grievances which cannot be removed.

We live in times when nothing, of public good at least, is generally acceptable, but what we believe can be traced to preconceived intention, and specific acts and formal contrivances of human understanding. A Christian instructor

thoroughly accomplished would be a standing restraint upon such presumptuousness of judgment, by impressing the truth that—

"In the unreasoning progress of the world  
A wiser spirit is at work for us,  
A better eye than ours."—*M.S.*

Revelation points to the purity and peace of a future world; but *our* sphere of duty *is* upon earth; and the relations of impure and conflicting things to each other must be understood, or we shall be perpetually going wrong, in all but goodness of intention; and goodness of intention will itself relax through frequent disappointment. How desirable, then, is it, that a minister of the Gospel should be versed in the knowledge of existing facts, and be accustomed to a wide range of social experience! Nor is it less desirable for the purpose of counterbalancing and tempering in his own mind that ambition with which spiritual power is as apt to be tainted as any other species of power which men covet or possess.

It must be obvious that the scope of the argument is to discourage an attempt which would introduce into the Church of England an equality of income, and station, upon the model of that of Scotland. The sounder part of the Scottish nation know what good their ancestors derived from their church, and feel how deeply the living generation is indebted to it. They respect and love it, as accommodated in so great a measure to a comparatively poor country, through the far greater portion of which prevails a uniformity of employment; but the acknowledged deficiency of theological learning among the clergy of that church is easily accounted for by this very equality. What else may be wanting there, it would be unpleasant to inquire, and might prove invidious to determine: one thing, however, is clear; that in all countries the temporalities of the Church Establishment should bear an analogy to the state of society, otherwise it cannot diffuse its influence through the whole community. In a country so rich and luxurious as England, the character of its clergy must unavoidably sink, and their influence be everywhere impaired, if individuals from the upper ranks, and men of leading talents, are to have no inducements to enter into that body but such as are purely spiritual. And this "tinge of secularism" is no reproach to the clergy, nor does it imply a deficiency of spiritual endowments. Parents and guardians, looking forward to sources of honourable maintenance for their children and wards, often direct their thoughts early towards the church, being determined partly by outward circumstances, and partly by indications of seriousness, or intellectual fitness. It is natural that a boy or youth, with such a prospect before him, should turn his attention to those studies, and be led into those habits of reflection, which will in some degree tend to prepare him for the duties he is hereafter to undertake. As he draws nearer to the time when he will be called to these duties, he is both led and compelled to examine the Scriptures. He becomes more and more sensible of their truth. Devotion grows in him; and what might begin in temporal considerations, will end (as in a majority of instances we trust it does) in a spiritual-mindedness not unworthy of that Gospel, the

lessons of which he is to teach, and the faith of which he is to inculcate. Not inappositely may be here repeated an observation which, from its obviousness and importance, must have been frequently made, viz. that the impoverishing of the clergy, and bringing their incomes much nearer to a level, would not cause them to become less worldly-minded: the emoluments, however reduced, would be as eagerly sought for, but by men from lower classes in society; men who, by their manners, habits, abilities, and the scanty measure of their attainments, would unavoidably be less fitted for their station, and less competent to discharge its duties.

Visionary notions have in all ages been afloat upon the subject of best providing for the clergy; notions which have been sincerely entertained by good men, with a view to the improvement of that order, and eagerly caught at and dwelt upon, by the designing, for its degradation and disparagement. Some are beguiled by what they call the *voluntary system*, not seeing (what stares one in the face at the very threshold) that they who stand in most need of religious instruction are unconscious of the want, and therefore cannot reasonably be expected to make any sacrifices in order to supply it. Will the licentious, the sensual, and the depraved, take from the means of their gratifications and pursuits, to support a discipline that cannot advance without uprooting the trees that bear the fruit which they devour so greedily? Will they pay the price of that seed whose harvest is to be reaped in an invisible world? A voluntary system for the religious exigencies of a people numerous and circumstanced as we are! Not more absurd would it be to expect that a knot of boys should draw upon the pittance of their pocket-money to build schools, or out of the abundance of their discretion be able to select fit masters to teach and keep them in order! Some, who clearly perceive the incompetence and folly of such a scheme for the agricultural part of the people, nevertheless think it feasible in large towns, where the rich might subscribe for the religious instruction of the poor. Alas! they know little of the thick darkness that spreads over the streets and alleys of our large towns. The parish of Lambeth, a few years since, contained not more than one church and three or four small proprietary chapels, while dissenting chapels, of every denomination were still more scantily found there; yet the inhabitants of the parish amounted at that time to upwards of 50,000. Were the parish church and the chapels of the Establishment existing there, an *impediment* to the spread of the Gospel among that mass of people? Who shall dare to say so? But if any one, in the face of the fact which has just been stated, and in opposition to authentic reports to the same effect from various other quarters, should still contend, that a voluntary system is sufficient for the spread and maintenance of religion, we would ask, what kind of religion? wherein would it differ, among the many, from deplorable fanaticism?

For the preservation of the Church Establishment, all men, whether they belong to it or not, could they perceive their true interest, would be strenuous: but how inadequate are its provisions for the needs of the country! and how much is it to be regretted that, while its zealous friends

yield to alarms on account of the hostility of dissent, they should so much over-rate the danger to be apprehended from that quarter, and almost overlook the fact that hundreds of thousands of our fellow-countrymen, though formally and nominally of the Church of England, never enter her places of worship, neither have they communion with her ministers! This deplorable state of things was partly produced by a decay of zeal among the rich and influential, and partly by a want of due expansive power in the constitution of the Establishment as regulated by law. Private benefactors, in their efforts to build and endow churches, have been frustrated, or too much impeded by legal obstacles: these, where they are unreasonable or unfitted for the times, ought to be removed; and, keeping clear of intolerance and injustice, means should be used to render the presence and powers of the church commensurate with the wants of a shifting and still-increasing population.

This cannot be effected, unless the English Government vindicate the truth, that, as her church exists for the benefit of all (though not in equal degree), whether of her communion or not, all should be made to contribute to its support. If this ground be abandoned, cause will be given to fear that a moral wound may be inflicted upon the heart of the English people, for which a remedy cannot be speedily provided by the utmost efforts which the members of the Church will themselves be able to make.

But let the friends of the church be of good courage. Powers are at work, by which, under Divine Providence, she may be strengthened and the sphere of her usefulness extended; not by alterations in her Liturgy, accommodated to this or that demand of fustian taste, nor by cutting off this or that from her articles or Canons, to which the scrupulous or the overweening may object. Covert schism, and open nonconformity, would survive after alterations, however promising in the eyes of those whose subtlety had been exercised in making them. Latitudinarianism is the parhelion of liberty of conscience, and will ever successfully lay claim to a divided worship. Among Presbyterians, Socinians, Baptists, and Independents, there will always be found numbers who will tire of their several creeds, and some will come over to the Church. Conventicles may disappear, congregations in each denomination may fall into decay or be broken up, but the conquests which the National Church ought chiefly to aim at, lie among the thousands and tens of thousands of the unhappy outcasts who grow up with no religion at all. The wants of these cannot but be feelingly remembered. Whatever may be the disposition of the new constituencies under the reformed parliament, and the course which the men of their choice may be inclined or compelled to follow, it may be confidently hoped that individuals acting in their private capacities, will endeavour to make up for the deficiencies of the legislature. Is it too much to expect that proprietors of large estates, where the inhabitants are without religious instruction, or where it is sparingly supplied, will deem it their duty to take part in this good work; and that thriving manufacturers and merchants will, in their several neighbourhoods, be sensible of the like obligation, and act upon it with generous rivalry?



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| Where lies the Land to which yon Ship<br>must go .....           | 253  | Within our happy Castle there dwelt One ..                         | 107  |
| Where lies the truth? has Man, in wisdom's<br>creed .....        | 461  | Within the mind strong fancies work .....                          | 214  |
| Where long and deeply hath been fixed the<br>root .....          | 431  | With little here to do or see .....                                | 158  |
| Where towers are crushed, and unforbidden<br>weeds .....         | 367  | "With sacrifice before the rising morn ..                          | 209  |
| Where will they stop, those breathing<br>Powers .....            | 228  | With Ships the sea was sprinkled far and<br>nigh .....             | 258  |
| While Anna's peers and early playmates<br>tread .....            | 273  | Woe to the Crown that doth the Cow! obey                           | 495  |
| While beams of orient light shoot wide and<br>high .....         | 282  | "Woe to you, Prelates! rioting in ease ..                          | 433  |
| While flowing rivers yield a blameless sport                     | 254  | Woman! the Power who left His throne on<br>high .....              | 447  |
| While from the purpling east departs .....                       | 506  | Wouldst thou be gathered to Christ's chosen<br>flock .....         | 626  |
| While Merlin paced the Cornish sands .....                       | 369  | Wouldst thou be taught, when sleep has<br>taken flight .....       | 229  |
| While not a leaf seems faded; while the fields                   | 265  | Would that our scrupulous Sires had dared<br>to leave .....        | 448  |
| While poring Antiquarians search the<br>ground .....             | 275  | Ye Apennines! with all your fertile vales ..                       | 352  |
| While the Poor gather round, till the end<br>of time .....       | 393  | Ye <del>halls</del> of Conscience—Spectres! that<br>frequent ..... | 518  |
| "Who but hails the sight with pleasure ..                        | 163  | Ye Lime-trees, ranged before this hallowed<br>Urn .....            | 546  |
| Who but is pleased to watch the moon on<br>high .....            | 461  | Ye sacred Nurseries of blooming Youth ..                           | 270  |
| Who comes—with rapture greeted, and<br>caressed .....            | 441  | Ye shadowy Beings, that have rights and<br>claims .....            | 473  |
| Who fancied what a pretty sight .....                            | 162  | Yes! hope may with my strong desire keep<br>pace .....             | 256  |
| Who is the happy Warrior? Who is he ..                           | 493  | Yes, if the intensities of hope and fear ..                        | 445  |
| Who ponders National events shall find ..                        | 514  | Yes, it was the mountain Echo .....                                | 209  |
| Who rashly strove thy Image to portray ..                        | 511  | Yes! thou art fair, yet be not moved .....                         | 111  |
| Who rises on the banks of Seine .....                            | 311  | Yes, though He well may tremble at the<br>sound .....              | 520  |
| Who swerves from innocence, who makes<br>divorce .....           | 383  | Ye Storms, resound the praises of your<br>King .....               | 422  |
| Who weeps for strangers? Many wept ..                            | 623  | Yet are they here the same unbroken knot                           | 192  |
| Why art thou silent! Is thy love a plant ..                      | 277  | Yet many a Novice of the cloistral shade ..                        | 434  |
| Why cast ye back upon the Gallic shore ..                        | 349  | Yet more,—round many a Convent's blazing<br>fire .....             | 433  |
| Why, Minstrel, these untuneful murmurings                        | 252  | Ye, too, must fly before a chasing hand ..                         | 434  |
| Why should the Enthusiast, journeying<br>through this Isle ..... | 463  | Ye Trees! whose slender roots entwine ..                           | 366  |
| Why should we weep or mourn, Angelic boy                         | 581  | Yet Truth is keenly sought for, and the<br>wind .....              | 441  |
| Why sleeps the future, as a snake enrolled                       | 481  | Yet, yet, Biscayans! we must meet our Foes                         | 318  |
| Why stand we gazing on the sparkling<br>Brine .....              | 469  | Ye vales and hills whose beauty hither drew                        | 587  |
| Why, William, on that old grey stone ..                          | 481  | You call it, "Love lies bleeding,"—so you<br>may .....             | 169  |
| Wild Redbreast! hadst thou at Jemima's lip                       | 272  | You have heard "a Spanish Lady .....                               | 139  |
| Wisdom and Spirit of the universe .....                          | 89   | YOUNG ENGLAND—what is then become of<br>Old .....                  | 516  |
| With copious eulogy in prose or rhyme ..                         | 583  |  |      |
| With each recurrence of this glorious morn                       | 255  |  |      |